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HBCU CRISES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE DISCOURSE OF RENEWAL: A CRISIS COMMUNICATION CASE STUDY OF THREE INSTITUTIONS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Manship School of Mass Communication

by
Erica Courtney Taylor
B.A. Hampton University, 2004
M.A. Old Dominion University, 2008
August 2011

DEDICATION

This project is first and foremost dedicated to My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for without You, I could not have survived this endeavor or achieved anything of meaning. Next, I must dedicate this to my granny, Mrs. Colla Buckner, who selflessly provided me with my academic foundation and whose perseverance and determination despite all odds are truly inspiring to me. To my father, Mr. Michael Taylor, who has helped me to endure this process by empathetically sharing my burdens every step of the way and who is also not at all afraid to apply tough love. And, to my loving mother, Mrs. Rhonda Taylor, whose quiet strength and caring spirit always help me to find peace in any situation.

Thank you all for your unwavering support. I love you.

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ABSTRACT

Crises have been a part of all societies over the course of time. Leaders of small, primitive societies may have dealt with these crises by directly communicating with their citizens or by taking other hands-on approaches to crisis management and recovery. However, in large post-modern technological societies, leaders must find more efficient ways to handle and recover from crises. This qualitative study examines three crises that occurred at three Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) in the last six years.

Crisis communication planning and practices are explored with a special focus on elements of the discourse of renewal theory each institution implemented. The majority of existing research and literature in the field of crisis communication focuses on crisis management in corporate or governmental environments. This study, through each case presented, provides valuable insight into crisis communication in the educational sector. Additionally, the unique character and challenges of Historically Black Colleges and Universities are presented to add to the body of knowledge about these institutions. The ultimate purpose of this study is to develop a best practices model for continued renewal for each institution featured in this case. Generalized best practices are also provided for all HBCUs, students, scholars, and journalists to use in implementing and studying future post-crisis renewal efforts.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

A unique and little known subset of American higher education exists. This group of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) operates under special missions and character. These schools have, since their emergence during the American Civil War period, continuously fought for the right to exist and the opportunity to educate and prepare black students to be productive members of greater society. Many prominent African Americans are graduates of HBCUs and exemplify the spirit of community that fuels these institutions. HBCUs make up a small, but valuable portion of the spectrum of American higher education.

These schools often go unnoticed for several reasons. HBCUs remind some of slavery and segregation, the most racially charged periods in American history (Whiting, 1991). Others simply live in circles that have no need for knowledge about these institutions. These schools typically operate with smaller than average student bodies and disproportionally small staffs and budgets, thus limiting the means of exposure for HBCUs. The challenges facing HBCUs are vast.

Public relations practitioners at HBCUs face special challenges as well. The virtual invisibility of these institutions makes it difficult to build mutually beneficial relationships outside of those directly connected to the institution. HBCU communication directors work within their university staff, technology, and budget constraints to promote the sustainability of these institutions. These practitioners have varying degrees of input in university and communications administration and because of the nature of these institutions these professionals have to be especially adaptable to frequent change. In terms of media coverage, HBCUs are usually only publicized when there is a campus tragedy or crisis.

Crises affect the core of any organization, but a crisis situation can be especially devastating to an HBCU. The challenges these institutions face are only magnified in times of

crisis and even the most well prepared HBCUs have to exert extreme effort to overcome a crisis. Communicating efforts of crisis renewal at an HBCU requires a unique level of creativity and dedication.

"To say that the communications function can make or break an institution, particularly in a time of crisis, is an understatement" (Lawson, 2007, p. 97). Crises have been a part of all societies over the course of time. These crises include violent acts such as terrorism, economic recessions and depressions, and natural disasters. No organization is immune from crisis, but these incidents can be especially devastating to Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In large post-modern technological societies, leaders have found and continue to implement efficient ways to handle crises. Indeed, rules for addressing crises abound in public relations and other literature.

Crisis Defined

Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2007) provided several definitions that characterize a crisis. They said crises are unique events in the history of organizations that come as a surprise, pose a significant threat, and require immediate response. These authors also said crises interrupt the achievement of an organization's "high-priority goals" (p. 7). Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2007, p. 8) further explained the aforementioned factors of a crisis as illustrated in (Table 1).

Fearn-Banks (2007) described a crisis as a major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting the organization, company, or industry, as well as its publics, products, services, or good name. A crisis interrupts normal business transactions and can sometimes threaten the existence of the organization" (p. 8). Coombs (2007) said long-term negative consequences can occur if a crisis is not handled properly. "In order for a major crisis to occur, it must exact a major toll on human lives, property, financial earnings, the reputation, and the general health and well-being of an organization" (Mitroff and Anagnos, 2001, pp. 34-35).

TABLE 1

KEY COMPONENTS OF A WORKING DEFINITION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CRISIS

Unexpected	An event comes as a surprise. This surprise may be something for which the organization could not have anticipated or planned. It could also result from conditions that exceed even the most aggressive crisis management plans.
Nonroutine	Problems occur daily in nearly all organizations. To account for these problems, organizations engage in routine procedures. Crises are events that cannot be managed by routine procedures. Instead, crises require unique and often extreme measures.
Produces Uncertainty	Because they are unexpected and beyond the routine actions of organizations, crises produce tremendous uncertainty. Organizations cannot be aware of all causes and ultimate effects of crises without some degree of investigation. Efforts to reduce uncertainty may continue for months or even years after a crisis.
Threatens High-Priority Goals	Crises introduce an intense level of threat to the organization and its affiliates. This threat has the capacity to cripple the organization's attempts to meet its most important goals. Thus, crises have the potential to permanently destroy an organization.

Fearn-Banks explained five stages of a crisis: prodromes, preparation/prevention, containment, recovery, and learning. Again, prodromes are warning signs organizations must notice and heed in every effort to avoid a crisis, with the realization that some crises are inevitable. The preparation or prevention stage is where organizations plan for a possible impending crisis. Proactive and reactive strategies can be used. The third stage, containment, is where an organization works to minimize the duration and impact of the crisis. The recovery

stage is the effort to return to normalcy. Fearn-Banks' final stage of learning is where evaluation of the crisis and crisis communication occurs and the crisis is used as a prodrome for a future crisis.

Three recent crises at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have been isolated for this study. This project is a case study of a campus shooting at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia; a financial, misappropriation of funds scandal at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas; and a natural disaster, Hurricane Katrina's impact on Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans. According to Mitroff and Anagos' (2001) definition, all of these crises are considered major. Lives were lost and endangered, property was gravely damaged, and major financial and reputational hardships were incurred.

A crisis is "not necessarily a bad thing. It can be a radical change for good…." (Friedman, 2002, p. 5). While the initial incidents experienced by the three universities in this study were indeed bad or negative situations, the universities used these crisis experiences as catalysts to improve their institutional well-being. This study examines each case with a focus on institutional post-crisis communication discourse, strategies, and tactics as tools of renewal.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine major crises that occurred at three Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) in the last five years. The three institutions featured in this study are Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia; Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas; and Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans, Louisiana. These crises include violence, financial scandal, and natural disaster respectively, highly public events in areas of major concern for any organization. Crisis communication planning and practices will be examined with a major focus on elements of the discourse of renewal theory that each institution implemented in the time following each crisis. Each institution has resumed normal operations

and is continuously using an outlook of renewal in regular public relations operations. The goal of this study is to determine and explain if HBCUs experienced any special post-crisis communication challenges and opportunities, how the institutions addressed the situations, and to ultimately develop best practices recommendations for each university under study. These recommendations can also serve as a guide for other HBCU public relations practitioners to use in crisis planning and management, in communicating post-crisis renewal efforts, and in exercising stewardship to help achieve long-term institutional sustainability. For reference, this study uses the terms Black, African American, and Negro interchangeably.

Significance of the Study

The majority of existing research and literature in the field of crisis communication focuses on crisis management in corporate or governmental environments. For instance, Ulmer and Sellnow (2000) examined how Jack in the Box handled the 1993 E. coli outbreak linked to the company's food. Similarly, Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004) examined the effect of Arthur Andersen and Bridgestone/Firestone's damaged reputations on company brands. Horsley and Barker (2002) surveyed more than 100 state governmental practitioners to find out the level of proactivity in governmental crisis communication. Sellnow (1993) researched corporate and governmental responses to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill.

This study, through each case presented, provides valuable insight into crisis communication in the educational sector. Additionally, crisis communication strategies and tactics unique to Historically Black Colleges and Universities are presented. The particular focus of this study has not been previously researched from this perspective. This study adds to the professional and academic discourse in crisis communication. The findings are useful for public relations practitioners at HBCUs and other institutions, especially those who are responsible for

handling crisis communication. Public relations students and scholars can also use these findings to gain greater understanding of crisis communication and recovery and minority publics.

Historical Background

Higher education arrived in America in the 1600s. The first institutions were the colonial colleges of Harvard, The College of William and Mary, and Yale, all of which initially served the purpose of training clergymen. As the nation developed, higher education grew into a highly recognized, highly diverse set of institutions. The founding, structure and management of these institutions are varied and students who attend these schools have vastly different experiences. Today, American higher education is made up of a collage of institutions. They vary in size, governance, mission, location, affiliation, demographic makeup, and offerings among other areas. Some basic principles, however, make up the goals of most current institutions of higher learning. Gould (2003) said these goals include providing a basic liberal arts curriculum, research, scholarship, and knowledge to society.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), however, were born out crisis, under truly unique circumstances. For roughly one hundred years after the Civil War, HBCUs served as the only option for Blacks to earn higher education in the American south. These schools came into existence in America's antebellum period in the northern United States. Cheney University in Pennsylvania, founded in 1837, was the first HBCU. Some of the oldest HBCUs were founded largely by churches and religious organizations. The Presbyterian Church established Lincoln University in Pennsylvania in 1854, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church founded Wilberforce University in Ohio in 1856. In the post-bellum era, more Black colleges were established, mainly for the purpose of educating newly freed former slaves. The Morrill Act of 1890 allowed states federal funding to found land-grant collegiate institutions. By 1890 some 200 HBCUs were in existence. Most southern states chose to establish separate

schools for Black students rather than integrating the White institutions (Gardner, 2002). All but seven of currently existing HBCUs are in the southeastern portion of the country. More than half of these institutions are in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas.

Due to intimidation from groups with strict racist segregationist policies in mainstream higher education and southern society as a whole, HBCUs became somewhat of a safe haven for educated Blacks. HBCUs not only educated Blacks and helped them in their attempts to assimilate into society after slavery, but they served as pillars of their communities. They were economic, knowledge, and cultural centers. Many students came from states miles away to attend these institutions in hopes of taking steps toward a more prosperous future. These institutions helped to produce many prominent Black leaders including Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Jesse Jackson, Spike Lee, Phylicia Rashad, and Oprah Winfrey. Today 105 HBCUs exist in 22 states, according to Altbach, et. al. (2005, p. 523).

In Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Congress officially defined an HBCU as an institution whose principal mission was and is the education of Black Americans, was accredited and was established before 1964. HBCUs have a vital part in the American higher education system. “HBCUs, because of their unique sensibility to the special needs of young African American minds, remain the institutions that demonstrate the most effective ability to graduate African American students who are poised to be competitive in the corporate, research, academic, governmental and military arenas” (UNCF, 1999). HBCU presidents founded the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) in 1944 to collectively appeal for support for operating costs. UNCF supports minority students at a variety of institutions of higher education. This fund also provides direct financial support to 39 private liberal arts HBCUs. The UNCF reports that there are currently 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, making up just three

percent of all American colleges and universities. The whole of mainstream universities in America are often called Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), especially when referring to these institutions in comparison to HBCUs.

"The average graduation rate at many HBCUs is higher than the average graduation rate for African Americans at majority institutions" (UNCF, 1999). HBCUs are experts at educating African Americans (UNCF, 1999). HBCUs have achieved several accomplishments and have made significant contributions to American academic and professional society. HBCUs graduate more than 50 percent African American professionals. More than 50 percent of African American public school teachers and 70 percent of Black dentists are also graduates of HBCUs. HBCUs award more than one in three of the degrees held by African Americans in natural sciences and in mathematics. Also, more than half of African Americans who graduate from HBCUs go on to graduate or professional schools.

Nichols (2004, p. 220) outlined six common goals of HBCUs:

- maintaining the Black American historical and cultural tradition;
- providing key leadership for the Black American community;
- providing Black American role models for social, political and economic purposes in the Black community;
- assuring economic function in the Black American community;
- addressing issues between minority and majority populations;
- producing Black agents for research, institutional training, and information dissemination in the Black and other minority communities.

The Village - HBCU Characteristics

"Each HBCU is like an African village or family where the family takes care of its people (students)" (Gardner, 2002, p. 10).

Roebuck and Murty (1993) listed several reasons why students choose to attend HBCUs, especially post-*Brown v. Board of Education*. These reasons are also testaments to why HBCUs are still relevant in today's diverse system of higher education. For example: students feel more accepted; they perform better academically than at PWIs and they are less likely to drop-out; they have more emotional support and a more appealing social life; they are more involved on campus; and they have a closer relationship with HBCU faculty (p. 203).

Walters described the goals of HBCUs as quite different from those of mainstream or predominantly White institutions (PWIs). Black colleges have a much more specific set of goals. HBCUs strive to maintain key elements of Black history and culture; to provide leadership for the Black community; to enhance the economy of the Black community; to provide Black role-models who can address how mainstream society affects Blacks; and to produce graduates who can manage societal minority relations and who have specialized career training (Roebuck and Murty, 1993, p. 10).

Gardner (2002) said HBCUs help better prepare Black students because of the strong mentoring environment and the abundant presence of role models students can relate to. Students are also able to more fully participate in collegiate life, "not just in athletics or the choir, as is the case at many PWIs" (p. 10). They have a much better chance of becoming a leader in student government or homecoming king or queen. For many Black students, attending an HBCU may be "the only time that their excellence and not their race will measure them" (p. 10).

Whiting (1991) said teaching is highly emphasized at HBCUs. "Liberal arts colleges, which place a higher priority on teaching than research, rely less on adjunct faculty. Most UNCF colleges fit that mold and mirror that pattern. Even with the 2 percent decline in tenured and tenure-track positions, nearly 74 percent of faculty at UNCF schools are serving in tenured or tenure-track roles. By comparison, about 30 to 35 percent of all faculty have tenure or are on

track to get it, continuing a decline in their numbers that started in the 1970s" (Cooper, 2010). HBCU faculty members tend to not only embrace teaching, but also do so in a manner similar to how a parent would teach a child. They encourage students to excel academically, as expected, but they also often provide a shoulder to lean on for students who wish to share personal experiences. These professors also provide personalized career guidance. Many HBCUs have either written or unwritten policies of mandatory class attendance and some institutions even have curfews to help encourage student success; thus, contributing to the success of the "village."

In their book, *The Black College Mystique*, Willie, Reddick and Brown (2006) summarized what distinguishes HBCUs. The authors said these schools have unique curricula, unique perspectives on service and faculty mentoring, and unique admissions practices. HBCUs often accept more students who may not have the best standardized test scores or high school GPAs, but who have "potential" that their PWI counterparts do not consider (pp. 71-72).

HBCUs also tend to have intensely loyal alumni in terms of affection for the alma maters. HBCU alumni hold fond memories of their own collegiate experiences and they provide moral support and mentorship for current students and recent graduates. Homecoming activities at an HBCU typically last an entire week and alumni return for several days. If the school has a marching band, the unique high-step marching style, dancing and playing of popular Black music, the band is often the focal point of football and basketball games. This is another unique aspect of HBCU culture in that students and alumni tend to dress nicely for sporting events and come more often to socialize and see the band than to watch the actual game. After an HBCU football game there is a "5th Quarter" where the bands from the two competing schools continue the battle that began at halftime. Bands stay in the stands surrounded by alumni and take turns playing different songs until one band quits. In the 21st century, the battle even sometimes

continues online where band members share performance videos and debate about who is "the best band in the land." The HBCU band is its own village of sorts and band members from different schools share in this culture. This type of bonding also occurs throughout other campus student organizations, including greek life.

Black students form lifelong bonds through their attendance at HBCUs. "Black students can make lifelong friends at [PWIs], but they may not feel part of the village or family. This type of bonding at HBCUs crosses or overlaps with other HBCUs. Graduates of historically Black colleges are connected to one another because of the HBCU experience and association. The [HBCU] bond ties students and alumni together and follows them everywhere" (Gardner, 2002, p. 11).

The Visionaries - HBCU Leaders

Nichols (2004) stated that HBCU leaders must remember their roles as educators first. Nichols said presidents and other leaders of HBCUs in the 21st century must communicate effectively with a variety of publics, including faculty, students, administrative staff, support staff, community organizations, alumni, parents, friends, and others.

> HBCUs that thrive throughout the twenty-first must continue to maintain their enrollment and to graduate competent, ethical alumni; to recruit more competent, dedicated, politically astute administrators and faculty; to develop and/or to acquire accredited programs/curricula; to encourage political, business community alliances/partnerships; to maintain or exceed present institutional funding; and, to create a more friendly workplace for employees and administers, all of which are apparent for good institutions of higher learning. And make no mistake about the situation of HBCUs, as they must not only be good institutions of higher learning, the must also be *flawless* (Nichols, 2004, p. 223).

Fields (2001) interviewed retiring presidents of HBCUs to find out what recommendations these leaders had for the future leadership of HBCUs. Dr. Leonard Dawson, then president of Voorhees College in South Carolina, said that "presidents of these colleges

must find a way to articulate consistent, meaningful and relevant visions for the institutions consistent with the educational, social and moral imperatives—even in the midst of an ever-changing social and political climate" (p. 23).

Abelman and Dalessandro (2009) conducted a content analysis of HBCU mission and vision statements and suggested that communication between a university and its publics can be improved by generating a vision statement that is shared with the publics. These statements should present aspirations for enhancing the quality of education and they should also offer an earnest guidance in making educational decision and setting priorities that affect the entire university community. In order for the vision statement to be generally accepted and adopted it must be "clear, compelling, and complex and possess relative advantage and observability" (p. 122). Additionally, mission statements should unify student, faculty, and staff perceptions of the university with the perceptions of the dominant coalition. Although this study found HBCU vision and mission statements lacking in the aforementioned categories, two of the universities featured in this case study were among the benchmark institutions in several categories. This study was conducted in the years post-crisis for Xavier and Texas Southern. Xavier University of Louisiana's mission statement ranked highly as a community-shared document. Texas Southern University's vision statement ranked in the top three for shared values, compelling language, and complexity.

A study of HBCU presidential leadership in the overall crisis management process after Hurricane Katrina revealed that instinct, values, experience, and faith are common values of charismatic leaders who led recovery efforts for their institutions (Nelson, 2007). This study included an analysis of Norman Francis' leadership at Xavier. These leaders also demonstrated the ability to effectively delegate to other campus leaders – members of the dominant coalition.

Presidents also conveyed a "strikingly important" vision for renewal that enabled their institutions and communities to rebound (p. 10).

Perceptions of HBCUs

Altbach et. al. (2005) also said that American universities are now gaining more visibility and media attention than ever (p. 1). This is due to the current 24 hour news cycle environment and the rise in social media use. Also, the recent outbreak of campus violence and crises has caused media and community members to have heightened awareness of such incidents. However, though universities as a whole are gaining media coverage, HBCUs suffer in the area of public recognition. Whiting (1991) said this disparity exists as a result of the segregation era. He said no matter how much an HBCU contributes economically to the surrounding community, the school is virtually invisible. He said few citizens, Black or otherwise, in the community of an HBCU can tell a stranger where the campus is located (p. 33). This problem is even more prominent when community members are asked to identify any recent activities or accomplishments of their local HBCU.

HBCU Campus Crises

Crises are always on the horizon and the extent to which organizations prepare for, react to and navigate through them has an impact on the institution's well-being, reputation and even sustainability. Media relations is an important component. This is especially the case for HBCUs. The lack of (especially positive) media coverage, reluctance from campus leaders to engage media, and poor university recognition by local publics cause an extreme public relations challenge for HBCUs. It is difficult for university public relations practitioners to implement any public relations plan with these forces against them.

These factors present even more of a challenge when an HBCU experiences a crisis situation such as a shooting, a scandal or a natural disaster. Without the full support or trust of

campus leadership it is difficult to develop and implement a functional crisis communication plan and renewal effort. This means the individual in charge of public relations must be a member of the primary decision-making body or the dominant coalition, described below. Though management may not fully understand the public relations function or may deem public relations practitioners under-qualified to be a member of the dominant coalition, public relations practitioners are essential members of this inner circle. Any effective plan must involve campus leadership and administration and should designate the lead public relations professional in charge of communicating. If such a plan is designed, it is common in times of crisis to abandon it and operate under the direction of the leader.

Strong-handed and visionary leaders are historically at the helm of HBCUs. Thus, public relations practitioners must prove themselves worthy and capable of being contributing members of the dominant coalition. Public relations and crisis communication literature note that a crisis can be worsened if the lead public relations professional is not a member of the dominant coalition. In a large-scale crisis, if the situation is made direr, the image and reputation of the organization or in this case the university and all HBCUs suffer further.

HBCUs do, however, have opportunities and possibilities that they can take advantage of during and after a crisis. If a crisis situation allows an HBCU to gain increased media coverage, the institution can use this to its advantage. While communicating the details of the crisis, the school can use the opportunity to highlight positive history and current activities. If an existing crisis plan is implemented or if minimally the crisis is handled responsibly, the HBCU has an opportunity to rebrand itself. As a possible silver lining to a campus crisis, HBCUs can use the typically uncontrolled and temporarily captive media and community to begin a new trend of effective two-way communication.

Cases for Study

Hampton University

Brigadier General Samuel Armstrong was appointed in 1866 to Superintendent of the Freedmen's Bureau of the Ninth District of Virginia. According to the National Archives the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) was established in 1865 to aid former slaves and impoverished whites in the social reconstruction of the American south after the Civil War. Drawing upon his experiences with mission schools in Hawaii, Armstrong procured funding from the American Missionary Association to establish a school on the Wood Farm, also known as "Little Scotland," in Hampton, Virginia at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. On April 1, 1868, Armstrong opened Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute with the following declared purpose.

> The thing to be done was clear: to train selected Negro youth who should go out and teach and lead their people first by example, by getting land and homes; to give them not a dollar that they could earn for themselves; to teach respect for labor, to replace stupid drudgery with skilled hands, and in this way to build up an industrial system for the sake not only of self-support and intelligent labor, but also for the sake of character.

Practical experience in trades and industrial skills were emphasized and students were able to pay their way through school by working in various jobs throughout the burgeoning campus. By 1872, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute was flourishing and drawing students from all over the country. One day that year, a young man met with the assistant principal to request admission. His clothing and person were so unkempt from his long journey he was nearly turned away. The assistant principal asked him to sweep the recitation room. The young man, excited at the prospect of work, not only swept the floor three times but thoroughly dusted the room four times, thereby passing a rigorous "white glove" inspection. Upon seeing the results of his work, the assistant principal decided this student was fit to attend the institute. The

newly accepted student was Booker T. Washington, who would become Hampton's most distinguished graduate. At only 25 years old, at the request of General Armstrong, Washington helped found Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1881.

- **Native Americans**

During the night of April 18, 1878, a group of Native Americans arrived in Hampton from Fort Sill, where they had been imprisoned at the close of the Red River War. They were sent to Hampton at the request of General Armstrong. These seventy men and women became the first American Indian students at Hampton and began a Native American education program that spanned into the early 21st century.

- **The Trade School Era**

Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, Hampton Normal School saw a dramatic increase in enrollment and educational offerings. A new trade school offered instruction in farming, carpentry, harness making, printing, tailoring, clocksmithing, blacksmithing, painting, and wheelwrighting. By 1904, nearly three-fourths of all boys at Hampton were taking trades classes. In addition to expansion of the agricultural program in 1913, Hampton's music program flourished under the direction of Dr. R. Nathaniel Dett, who brought the Hampton Choir and Quartet to the world through highly acclaimed performances in London, Vienna, Zurich, Berlin, Geneva, and Paris.

- **Hampton Institute – The College**

Enhancing Hampton's curriculum to meet accreditation requirements was the focus during the late 1900s and throughout the 1920s. Many new programs were added and the requirements for existing courses were raised to meet the new standard Hampton placed upon itself. A Library Science School was established in 1924 and an extension program was begun in 1929 to reach students who were unable to come to campus. The Robert C. Ogden Auditorium

was built in 1918 and with two thousand seats, it was at the time the largest auditorium in the area. Today, the newly renovated Ogden Hall is considered one of the finest acoustical venues in the nation.

In the Principal's Report of 1929, Hampton President Dr. James Edward Gregg stated that Hampton Institute was officially a college. Each academic unit was fit to prepare students for life and work in their chosen fields. On July 1, 1930, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute became Hampton Institute and the title of Principal–Dr. George Phenix at the time–was changed to President.

- **The Great Depression**

The 1930s brought with it the Great Depression and intense challenges for Hampton Institute. Already confronted with an overwhelming budget deficit, the college experienced a decrease in enrollment and budget cuts and staff dismissals were common. To cut costs, the Library School was discontinued in 1940 and the Nursing School was taken over by a local hospital that same year.

When America became involved in World War II, financial relief arrived for Hampton Institute as the United States government established war training facilities on the campus. Many of the buildings used for military training were purchased by the college after the war and are still in use today. Also during this time, Hampton students participated in a pilot training partnership with Hampton's sister school, Tuskegee Institute (now University). Many of the male students served as Tuskegee Airmen in World War II.

In addition to Hampton's financial troubles during the Depression, many also felt during this time that the school's decades-old educational philosophies no longer applied to a changing racial climate where the emerging youth began to question accepted policies and procedures. Students wanted more self-governance and a change in many of the regulations. While the

Hampton staff was interracial, no Blacks were employed as heads of departments and schools. Thus, in 1940, Blacks were appointed to a few high-ranking administrative positions including Dean of Instruction and Dean of Women. In 1949, Dr. Alonzo G. Moron became the first Black president of Hampton Institute.

- **A New Era of Growth**

During the 1950s, programs in Agriculture and the trades were phased out due to decreased enrollment and a change in the American workforce climate. However, a number of new programs were initiated, including graduate studies in mathematics, chemistry, and physics.

During the tenure of Hampton Institute's ninth President, Dr. Jerome H. Holland, the college experienced growth in every area. Twelve new buildings were constructed, faculty numbers increased, average salaries doubled, and student enrollment reached 2,600 by 1969. New programs and departments were established, including a computer technology program, the College of Cooperative Education, and a Department of Mass Media Arts.

Accompanying Hampton's steady growth in the 1960s was the controversial landscape of the Civil Rights Movement and the changing attitudes of Blacks, who were finally able to see the promise of first-class citizenship and equal educational and economic opportunity in a democratic society. Noted civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, visited the Hampton campus. Rosa Parks moved to the Hampton area in 1957, two years after being arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white bus passenger. Parks worked on campus as a hostess at The Holly Tree Inn. On February 11, 1960, a group of Hampton Institute students were the first in Virginia to stage a lunch counter sit-in, to protest local business' refusal to serve blacks and whites equally.

- **Today**

Dr. William R. Harvey was unanimously elected the twelfth President of Hampton Institute in 1978 and is still serving in this position. His efforts include outlining a core set of required courses, establishing an M.B.A. program and centers for high-tech scientific research, and expanding the Continuing Education Program. By 1983, student enrollment had reached nearly four thousand and SAT scores of entering freshmen increased by 93 points. In 1984, after a nine-month study of Hampton Institute's rapid growth and development in quality of students, faculty and academic offerings, the recommendation was made to change the name to Hampton University.

In recent years Harvey has made a name for the university. In the midst of economic downtimes, Hampton has managed to gain and maintain financial wellbeing. Harvey, a sole owner of a Pepsi bottling plant in Michigan, has used his business acumen to lead the university. In a June 2011 interview on Bloomberg Television's In the Loop, Harvey was cited as a financial expert and he gave his opinion of Hampton's standing in tough economic times. He stated the university is doing very well due to its strong and diverse financial portfolio (*The Washington Post*, June 28, 2011). In addition to securing large endowment and operating funds, defying the label of financially struggling HBCUs, Harvey has also shared his personal finances with the university – an example of the leader looking after the village. This year, Harvey donated more than $1million of his personal money to the university, specifically to increase faculty and staff salaries (*Daily Press*, June 24, 2011). This demonstrates his visionary dedication to enhancing the core mission of education for life at Hampton.

More than 140 years after its inception, Hampton University continues to break new ground in academic achievement, staying true to General Armstrong's original promise of **The Standard of Excellence, An Education for Life.** As an example the university in partnership

with the Scripps Howard Foundation opened the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications in 2002. The state-of-the-art facility serves the vision of Harvey and the mission Hampton University.

> "Give light and the people will find their own way." This motto, coined by the Scripps Howard Foundation, has been the guiding inspiration of Hampton University's Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications since its inception in 2002. Uniquely designed as a modern, symbolic lighthouse, the Scripps Howard School was built with a vision to produce ethical and competitive leaders equipped to practice excellence and innovation in multimedia technology while adhering to the core principles of journalism and communications (Scripps Howard School, 2011).

Hampton University currently offers 68 undergraduate, 27 master's, six doctoral, and 2 specialist in education degree programs. Hampton University's current endowment is $193.4 million and the university boasts numerous other achievements. In addition to Booker T. Washington, other prominent alumni include journalists Spencer Christian (former weatherman for *Good Morning America*) and Angela Burt Murray (former editor-in-chief of *Essence* magazine); comedienne Wanda Sykes; and Rick Mahorn (former Detroit Piston) (Hampton University, 2010).

Crisis at Hampton

Students and alumni know Hampton University as "Our Home by the Sea." In addition to the university sitting on its own peninsula with the president's stately home and university-owned yachts lining the campus waterfront, this term derives from the home-like atmosphere at Hampton. Any major disruption to his "home" is certainly unexpected and threatens the Hamptonian way of life. However, such a disruption occurred in the spring of 2009.

School violence incidents have gotten heightened public and media attention especially following the tragic murders at Virginia Polytechnic and State University (Virginia Tech), the worst school violence occurrence in American history. Hampton, which is located a few hours

from Virginia Tech, was subject to a highly publicized crisis event. In the early morning of April 26, 2009 a former Hampton student shot a pizza deliveryman, the night manager of the Harkness Hall freshman men's dormitory, and himself. No one was killed. Many Hampton students are not from the immediate geographic area and the question of campus safety quickly arose as students and parents bombarded the university with concerns.

Texas Southern University

Texas Southern University traces its beginnings back to the fall of 1925 when Wiley College, located in Marshall, Texas, established extension classes in the Houston area. The purpose of these extension classes was to provide in-service training for African Americans in Houston who were interested in receiving certification in teaching. The first meeting was held on September 11, 1925 at Trinity Methodist Church and classes were held the first year at the "Old Colored High School."

- **Houston Colored Junior College (1927-1934)**

On September 14, 1927, the Houston Public School Board agreed to fund the development of two junior colleges: one for whites and one for African Americans. With a loan of $2,800 from the Houston Public School Board, the Colored Junior College was born under the supervision of the Houston School District to provide an opportunity for African Americans to receive college training. The main provision of the authorization was that the college meet all instructional expenses from tuition fees collected from the students enrolling in the college. The initial enrollment for the first summer was 300. For the fall semester, the enrollment dropped to 88 students because many of the 300 enrolled during the summer semester were teachers who had to return to their jobs when the school year began. The Junior College was eventually able to increase enrollment and by 1931, it became a member of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and was approved by the Southern Association of Colleges.

- **Houston College for Negroes (1934-1947)**

In the summer of 1934, the Houston School Board changed the junior college to a four-year institution and named it Houston College for Negroes. Two years later, sixty-three individuals became members of the first graduating class. The college formally added a graduate program in the summer of 1943. In the spring of 1945, the Houston Independent School District severed its relationship with Houston College for Negroes, and thereafter all management of the college was vested in what was called the Separate Board of Regents.

The college operated in Yates High School, but by 1946 it had grown to an enrollment of approximately 1,400 students and needed more room. A few years earlier, with the help of Hugh Roy Cullen, a local philanthropist, the college obtained a 53-acre piece of property in the Third Ward area of Houston. Two generous donors: Mrs. T.M. Fairchild, in memory of her late husband; and Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Dupree, with the help of the local African American community, the college raised enough money to construct its first building on the new campus. In the fall of 1946, the college moved from Jack Yates High School to its first building, the new T.M. Fairchild Building, which is still an active facility at TSU.

- **Texas State University for Negroes (1947-1951)**

In February of 1946, Herman Marion Sweatt, an African American Houston mail carrier, applied to enroll in the law school at the University of Texas. Because Texas was segregated, Sweatt was denied admission and later filed a suit, with the support of the NAACP, against the University of Texas and the State of Texas. In response and believing the separate but equal doctrine would carry the day, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 140 on March 3, 1947, providing for the establishment of a Negro law school in Houston and the creation of a university to surround it. This bill was complemented by House Bill 788, which approved $2,000,000 to purchase a site near Houston to house this new college and support its operation. Texas

lawmakers initially considered Prairie View A&M College as the location of this new law school. However, on June 14, 1947, the decision was made to use the site of Houston College for Negroes, with its new campus at the center of a large and fast growing Black population. Thus, a new law school for Blacks and the Texas State University for Negroes was born. Under the separate but equal concept, the intention of Senate Bill 140 and House Bill 788 was to create a new university for Negroes in Houston that was meant to become the equivalent of the University of Texas in Austin.

- **Texas Southern University (1951-Present)**

On June 1, 1951, the name of this new university for Blacks was changed from Texas State University for Negroes to Texas Southern University after students petitioned the state legislature to remove the phrase "for Negroes." When the university opened its doors in September 1947, it had 2,300 students, two schools, one division and one college; the Law School, the Pharmacy School, the Vocational Division, and the College of Arts and Sciences. Responding to the changing times, in 1973, the 63rd Legislature designated Texas Southern University as a "special purpose" institution for urban programming. As a result, four more academic units were added--the College of Education, the School of Public Affairs, the School of Communications and the Weekend College.

Today, Texas Southern University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs in the following academic colleges and schools: the College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences; the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences; the College of Science and Technology; the College of Education; the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs; the School of Communication; the Thurgood Marshall School of Law; the Jesse H. Jones School of Business; the Thomas Freeman Honors College; the College of Continuing

Education and the Graduate School. Other programmatic emphases are found in the Center for Excellence in Urban Education, the Center for Transportation Training and Research, the Center on the Family and a variety of special programs and projects (Texas Southern University, 2010).

Crisis at TSU

Despite Texas Southern's rich history of providing quality education and fighting social injustice, in recent years the university has endured struggles vast enough to threaten its existence. TSU has endured academic instability in terms of accreditation and NCAA compliance, and the university has taken devastating financial blows. Dr. Priscilla Slade, former president of Texas Southern University, misappropriated funds from the university from 1999-2007 during her presidential tenure. She was prosecuted and settled the case in the spring of 2008, agreeing to repay more than $100,000 to the institution. Slade, also a former accounting professor at Texas Southern, "used university money to dress, decorate and landscape her house, take spa treatments and exercise classes" (Lozano, 2008). Slade was fired from the university and this financial scandal spurred a series of problems for the university including near loss of accreditation and NCAA scholarship eligibility, threat of closure, and a lack of leadership vacuum for the fledgling university. The actions angered students, community members, and alumni. All of this occurred when the university had no public relations office or staff, thus allowing for a frenzy of negative media coverage. This formerly open admissions university has since been striving to repair its image, reputation, and stability.

Xavier University of Louisiana

Of the 105 historically Black colleges and 253 Catholic colleges in the United States, only one is both Black and Catholic. That distinction belongs to Xavier University of Louisiana. Located in New Orleans, the liberal arts college dates back to 1915, when St. Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament founded the coeducational secondary school from

which it evolved. St. Katharine, supported by the interest of a substantial inheritance from her father, banker-financier Francis Drexel, founded and staffed many institutions throughout the United States in an effort to help educate Native Americans and Blacks. Pope John Paul II canonized her in October 2000.

Aware of the serious lack of Catholic-oriented education available to young Blacks in the South, Drexel came to New Orleans and established a high school. A normal school, offering one of the few career fields (teaching) open to Blacks at the time, was established shortly after the high school. In 1925 Xavier University became a reality when the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was established. The first degrees were awarded three years later. In 1927, a College of Pharmacy opened. Recognizing the University's need for a separate identity and room to expand, St. Katharine bought a tract of undeveloped land for a campus on the corner of Palmetto and Pine Streets in 1929. Construction of the U-shaped, gothic administration building (now a city landmark) was completed in 1933.

Through the years the campus gradually filled out with the addition of a library, which now houses music in 1937 and the gymnasium in 1937. Several other building have been erected since that time: St. Michael's men's dormitory in1955, the Student Center in 1962, St. Joseph's and Katharine Drexel women's dormitories in 1965 and 1969 respectively, the House of Studies in1967, the College of Pharmacy in 1970, the Norman C. Francis Academic/Science Complex in 1988, the new library and Resource Center and the College of Pharmacy addition in 1993, and the Peter Claver women's dormitory in 1994.

Xavier South, a multi-story office building, was purchased in 1990. The Living Learning Center, a co-ed residence hall for upperclassmen, and the Norman C. Francis Science Complex addition were completed in 1998. A new student center called the University Center opened in 2003. Saint Martin Deporres Hall an additional dormitory for upperclassmen opened the same

year. The newest addition to the College of Pharmacy on the site of the old student center is the state-of-the-art Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion that opened in 2010. The pharmacy addition was funded by a donation from the country of Qatar after Hurricane Katrina as explained in chapter six of this study.

Xavier President, Dr. Norman Francis has led most of the university's growth and achievements. Francis is an alumnus who took the helm of the institution in1968 at the age of only 36. Francis is now the longest-serving university president in the nation (*Chicago Defender*, February 25, 2009). He has built a significantly influential science program that he says is one of the world's "best-kept secrets" (Clark, 2009 p. 1). The College of Pharmacy, one of only two pharmacy schools in Louisiana, is among the nation's top three producers of African American Doctor of Pharmacy degree recipients. In pre-medical education, since 1993 Xavier ranks first in the nation in placing African American students into medical schools.

The nuns remain a vital presence on campus today, providing much-needed staffing and some financial assistance, but today a bi-racial Board of Trustees governs Xavier. Francis is a nationally recognized leader in higher education. Even with its special mission to serve the Black, Catholic community, Xavier's doors have always been open to qualified students of any race or creed. In fact today, more than 70 percent of Xavier's students are of other religious affiliations, and close to 30 percent are of other races (Xavier University of Louisiana, 2010).

Crisis at Xavier

Xavier University was forced to close during the fall 2005 semester after Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee failures and aftermath caused massive damage to the campus. Almost every building was flooded. Faculty, staff, students, and the entire City of New Orleans were victims of the devastating flooding and countless were displaced. Xavier's university relations department was run from a makeshift operation from Baton Rouge, Louisiana during

the closure. Faculty positions and academic programs had to be cut and some students had to live in hotel or cruise ship housing after the university reopened. Xavier is currently prospering in its ongoing recovery.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Public Relations Theories

Public Relations Practitioner Roles

The work of a public relations practitioner can seem ambiguous to those outside of the profession. Similarly, some organizations do not have a clear understanding of the public relations function. Scholars have created a knowledge base that clearly outlines the different roles held by public relations practitioners.

Broom and Smith (1979) described four roles in which public relations practitioners can work. Expert prescribers are resident experts on public relations matters. They diagnose public relations problems and prescribe solutions. Organization management respects the recommendations of the expert prescriber. Communication technicians possess specific communication skills such as graphic art or writing abilities. Technicians are not involved in decision-making and perform mandated tasks and services. Communication facilitators serve as intermediaries between the organization and its various publics. Their task is to promote two-way interaction so the lines of communication remain open. Communication facilitators work primarily at the departmental rather than the management level. Problem-solving process facilitators are part of the management team and collaborate with other team members in tackling public relations issues such as crisis management. They guide other members of the team in systematically addressing public relations matters.

Broom and Dozier (1986) refined these descriptions into two primary roles for public relations practitioners in organizations. In a management role the practitioner has direct access to the organization's leadership and has respected input in communications and other major

decisions. Public relations managers demonstrate attributes of problem-solving facilitation, expert prescription, and communication facilitation. The manager practitioner is also responsible for the oversight of the organization's public relations activities. Technicians primarily perform basic public relations duties including writing, pitching information to media, and designing and distributing publications. In certain public relations offices, technicians also perform administrative tasks such as answering telephones and making photocopies.

DeSanto, Moss, and Newman (2007) outlined five factors that make up the role of a communication manager. These factors are key policy and strategy advisor, monitor and evaluator, issues management expert, trouble-shooting problem-solver, and communication technician. The key advisor role describes the communication manager's role in the dominant coalition, explained below. Monitoring and evaluating involves setting and measuring the achievement of communication goals. As an issues management expert the communication manager serves as the "eyes and ears" of the organization (p. 447). This means the practitioner determines and responds to external threats. The trouble-shooting problem-solver is the "fire-fighter" of the organization who handles crisis communication (p. 447). Communication technicians engage in the technical or craftwork of public relations. This role is typically not deemed managerial. These duties associated with these roles apply across public and private organizations (Gregory, 2008).

> The five-dimensional model of communication/public relations practitioner responsibilities/work described here represent a significant advance in terms of developing a more comprehensive framework for analyzing and understanding what can be identified as the "managerial dimension" of the work performed by communication/public relations practitioners and the contribution they can make to the overall strategic management of organizations (Moss, Newman, and DeSanto, 2005, p. 886).

Dominant Coalition

Many public relations practitioners tend to work in multiple roles, especially at HBCUs, which tend to have small public relations staffs. Public relations managers are encouraged to work as a part of their organization's dominant coalition. The dominant coalition is the inner circle or the power structure within an organization. The way in which the dominant coalition values its public relations function dictates the presence or lack thereof of the chief public relations officer's presence as an equal member of the dominant coalition (Grunig and Grunig, 1992). Members of dominant coalitions exhibit several common characteristics such as authority, charisma, expertise, information, reward, and advanced education. These traits aid in management decision making. (Berger, 2005).

Historically, university presidents have served as the public relations representatives for their institutions and to this day many presidents consider engaging in public relations activities part of the duties of the president. "College and university presidents claim to support the public relations function. Therefore, chief public relations officers in higher education institutions should be part of the dominant coalition" (Turk, 2000, p. 44).

Turk (2000) said public relations practitioners are more likely to participate in the dominant coalition during times of crisis. Participation in this decision-making group is very important in a crisis situation. "Organizations benefit from including public relations managers in the dominant coalition because they possess conflict resolution skills" (p. 7). "Public relations managers therefore must be part of the dominant coalition if they are to favorably influence organizational choices, ideology, and practices….In doing so, public relations helps organizations manage their social responsibility obligations and build substantive relationships with others" (p. 8). This study examines the level of input each HBCU communication manager has within his or her university's dominant coalition.

Public Relations Models

Grunig and Hunt (1984) outlined four primary models of public relations that have been used since the inception and acceptance of the field as an independent profession. The press agentry or publicity model simply aims to influence the behavior of an organization's audience or audiences by using methods of persuasion. This was used primarily during the earliest years of the public relations profession. The public information model informs audience of the organization's perspective on an issue often through the dissemination of news releases. The one-way symmetrical communication model assumes the needs and preferences of certain publics and the organization communicates with these publics in a manner in accordance with these assumptions.

The most modern of the four and highly recommended model is two-way symmetrical communication. Today's public relations plans should be based in research and allow for two-way communication. This model depends on research of an organization's publics and the situation the organization is addressing. The results of the research help the organization to craft proper communications and interaction with its publics. This model also allows for feedback and ongoing communication between an organization and its publics, thus communication can be continuously adjusted to help foster mutually beneficial relationships.

Most public relations offices operate using a variety of the strategies, or mixed motives explained above. Further development of these models led to the derivation of a continuum that is centered with symmetrical communication and is asymmetrical on both ends. Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier developed the two-way model of excellent public relations in which organizations and publics can engage in mutually beneficial communication. An institution operating at either end of the spectrum would be favoring either the organization or the publics at the expense of the other. Operating on the ends of the spectrum leads to dysfunctional or unsatisfactory

relationships between organizations and publics. In the middle of the continuum is the "win-win zone" (Grunig, 2001, p. 25). Arrow 3 (Figure 1) represents two-way symmetrical communication within the larger spectrum of communication options. Two-way symmetrical communication in this model shows how communication managers negotiate between the organization and publics to reach a decision in the win-win zone. Grunig (2001) suggests in order to reach the win-win zone, practitioners should ideally be cooperative and unconditionally constructive.

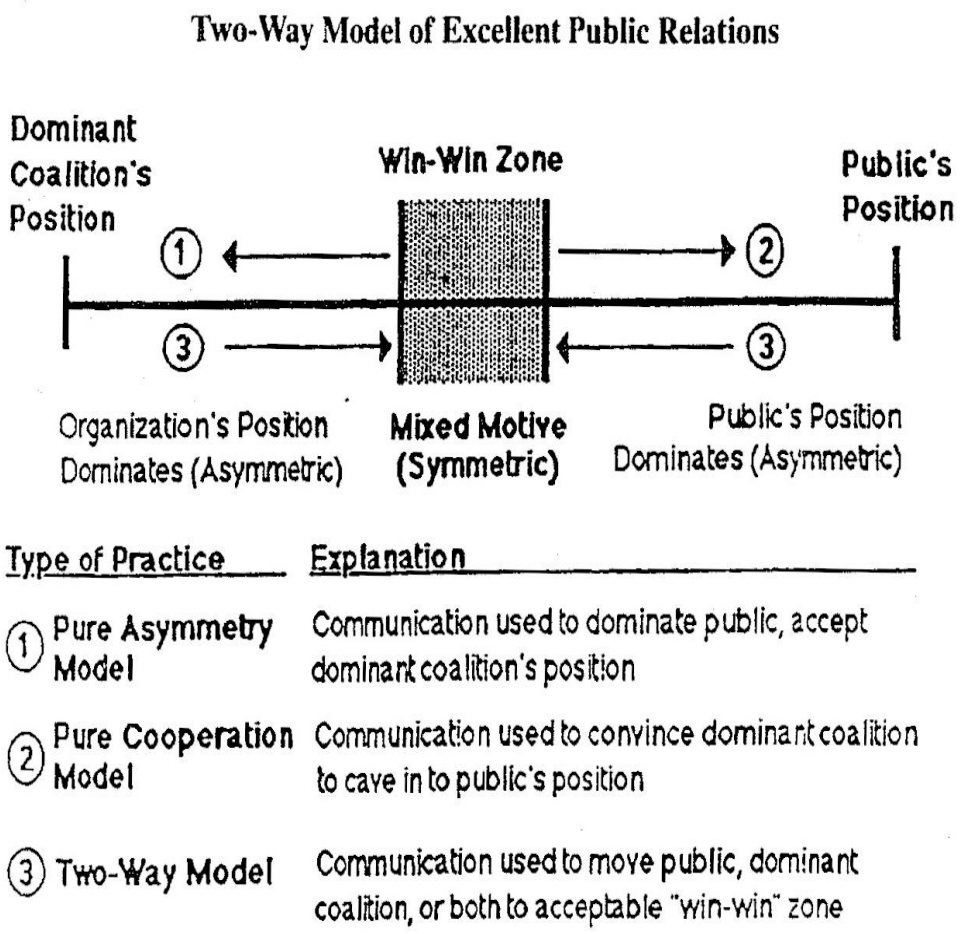


FIGURE 1
TWO-WAY MODEL OF EXCELLENT PUBLIC RELATIONS
Grunig (2001, p. 26)

Public Relations Processes

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics

Grand Strategy

On a macro level every organization operates under a grand strategy. In public relations and other units, the grand strategy represents industry or organizational-level policies. Botan (2006) defines grand strategy as "policy-level decisions an organization makes about goals, alignments, ethics, and relationship with publics and other forces in its environment" (p. 225). Campaign strategies, like all other campaign and unit activities, are bound by the grand strategy. Public relations practitioners communicating any issue must work within the grand strategy or strategies. There are four types of grand strategies: intransigent, resistant, cooperative, and integrative. Of these, the first three do not recognize communication managers as members of the

	GOAL	CHANGE	PUBLICS	ISSUES	COMMUNICATION	PRACTITIONERS
INTEGRATIVE GRAND STRATEGY	*Share* -Integrate organization into environment -Open to persuasive messages	*Positive* -"Our element" -Skill in change in how organization beats competitors	*Together* -Legit interests & own agendas -Make organization possible	*Build With* -Defined by publics -Issues equal opportunity -Natural part of the organizational life	*Produces Organization* -Organization is product of communication -Core function for all executives	*Strategic Team* -Internal & external advisors -Change managers -Ethics leaders

FIGURE 2
INTEGRATIVE GRAND STRATEGY
Botan (2006, p. 237)

dominant coalition and to varying degrees they do not foster open and mutually beneficial relationships. Botan (2006) recommended the integrative grand strategy (Figure 2). This strategy helps the organization to fully integrate into all of the possible relationships in its environments. This strategy also differs from the others because it views change as positive and welcomed. Issues, conflicts, or crises are viewed as opportunities and communication is a core function.

Goals

Goals are statements rooted in organization mission and vision. Goals are purposely written using general terms and do not feature items for measurement. Hon (1998) described goals as the major priorities of the organization. The primary purpose of a goal is to outline how an organization plans to address a particular issue, problem, or opportunity (Smith, 2005). Goals can be grouped into three categories: reputation management, relationship management, and task management. Reputation management goals address an organization's identity. Relationship management goals focus on how an organization engages with its publics. Task management goals are specific to accomplishing given and self-imposed assignments (Smith, 2005).

Objectives

Objectives emerge from organizational or campaign goals. Objective statements are clear and measurable and they aid in measuring milestones. Smith (2005) discussed criteria for effective objectives. These criteria explain that objectives must have links to research and goals, explicit definitions, measurability, time constraints, and attainability. Specific types of objectives as applied to public relations planning are outlined below.

Strategies

Campaign-level strategy is decision-making involving aligning resources and arguments to implement grand strategies (Botan, 2006). A strategy statement describes in concept how objectives will be achieved. These statements guide the public relations program. Key themes and messages outlined in the strategy statement(s) should carry throughout the campaign or program (Wilcox, et. al., 2000).

Tactics

Tactics are the visible elements of a communication plan (Smith, 2005). They are the "nuts and bolts" of the plan or the specific activities that operationalize strategies and help achieve objectives (Wilcox, et. al., 2000), p. 151). Tactics represent the technical characteristics

of public relations (Botan, 2006). Communication tools such as writing, designing, and media relations are used to implement tactics and reach publics.

ROPES

Jerry A. Hendrix developed the ROPE process of public relations. One of the more widely used by public relations practitioners, this process begins with research (R). An organization conducts quantitative and/or qualitative research, primary and secondary to determine who its publics are and the best way to communicate with these publics and negotiate relationships. A situation and self-analysis is developed during this phase. This analysis includes discovery of client information if a client is a part of the case and proper audiences are determined. The organizational problem, opportunity, and/or challenge are also clearly delineated during the research phase.

Next, an organization must define its objectives (O) in a public relations program or campaign. Objectives, as mentioned are specific benchmark statements that outline what a particular communications campaign will achieve. Objectives are put in place to help achieve overall goals. Ideally, objectives are measurable and they can help the organization to adjust to better any future communications efforts. Output objectives describe the development and implementation of collateral materials and activities Output objectives focus on the public relations tactics used to communicate with publics. Impact objectives represent intended effects on selected publics and are more specific and allow for more detailed evaluation. Five communication effects can be addressed by impact objectives: awareness, accuracy, understanding, agreement, and behavior (Kelly, 2001).

There are three types of impact objectives. Informational objectives allow for measurement of how a target public perceives messages. These objectives deal with how an organization wants a public to receive, understand, and retain messages. Smith (2005) terms

these awareness objectives as says they are best used for transmitting functional information. Informational objectives are appropriate for communicating noncontroversial issues early in a campaign or program. Attitudinal objectives aim to change a public's perceptions of an organization. These objectives indicate the level of interest an organization hopes to generate within a public. Attitudinal or acceptance objectives are particularly useful during times of controversy or in persuasive situations (Smith, 2005). Behavioral objectives seek behavior modification. These objectives should be focused on the "bottom line" of the organization (Smith, 2005, p. 76). Behavioral objectives not only encourage and invoke action, but they also help to build consensus and relationships. Objectives set the tone and pace of the campaign.

The heart of the campaign is the programming (P) phase. During this phase a variety of public relations strategies and tactics are implemented to help the organization achieve or exceed its set objectives. This phase can include use of controlled or uncontrolled media, producing publications or events, and distributing information in order to communicate with target publics about the key themes and messages of the campaign.

The next phase in this process is evaluation (E). Though this is one of the last phases, evaluation should be done throughout the campaign and tactics should be adjusted accordingly if necessary (Hendrix and Hayes, 2010, pp. 2-3). In evaluating a campaign follow-up research should be conducted. This evaluative research can also include quantitative or qualitative techniques. The primary purpose of evaluating a campaign is to measure the overall success of the program as well as the achievement of each objective so that an organization's public relations efforts can continuously improve.

Kathleen Kelly (2001) added stewardship (S) as a last phase to Hendrix's model of the process. Stewardship is an ongoing activity. According to Kelly, once an organization reaches the necessary publics, there is a need to build and maintain relationships with them since they

represent a long-term base of support. “It is easier to keep a friend than to make a new friend” (Kelly, 2001, p. 279). Kelly added this fifth step to the public relations process, noting that the four-step process failed to acknowledge ongoing relationships (p. 279).

Kelly listed four key elements of stewardship: reciprocity, responsibility, reporting and relationship building (p. 280). Reciprocity is an organization’s demonstration of gratitude to publics for supportive beliefs and behaviors. This gratitude is broken down into acts of appreciation and recognition. Organizations must also be socially responsible in dealing with supportive publics. This act of “relational responsibility” requires organizations to act as good citizens and keep their word in order to build and maintain public trust. Reporting is an essential element of accountability. This step of stewardship requires an organization to keep publics informed about developments related to a specific opportunity or problem. This process reinforces and encourages future positive attitudes and reactions toward the organization. Relationship building is at the foundation of public relations practice. Kelly says “the most effective means of nurturing relationships is quite simple: accept the importance of supportive publics and keep them at the forefront of the organization’s consciousness. Information and involvement are fundamental, and both should flow naturally from the organization’s work” (p. 286). Showing an organization is socially responsible, appreciative, and contributes to the public good presents the case for stewardship.

In a crisis situation, formal use of the ROPE(S) process is limited because no plan can be followed exactly during a time of such uncertainty. However, Hendrix states ROPES should not be ignored because applying all of these elements in crisis planning, management, recovery, and renewal can be helpful in organizing goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics. In outlining how to use the ROPE(S) process in crisis communication, Hendrix says in the research phase, worst-case scenarios should be planned for and that emergency contact lists should be developed.

Crisis communication objectives tend to focus on safeguarding lives and property and maintaining organizational credibility. Crisis programming could include developing and running an offsite public relations headquarters or a media information center. Programming could also include distribution of printed or electronic publications, face-to-face communication with publics, and responding to media either individually or via a press conference. Any set objectives should be measured and crisis notification functions should be reviewed during the evaluation phase. (Hendrix and Hayes, 2010, pp. 371-372). "Stewardship completes the process and furnishes an essential loop back to the beginning of managing relationships" (Kelly, 2001, p. 280).

It is important to recognize what roles are played by or should be played by public relations practitioners during a crisis. This way, if a crisis arises, there is no confusion regarding who will communicate what information and when. It is also necessary to use a public relations process to develop a crisis communication plan, even if the plan has to be modified during the crisis. The ROPES process is effective to use in crisis communication planning because it allows for detailed descriptions to be outlined in each phase, thus creating a clearly written communication plan that is ready to put into action if necessary.

Best Practices

In the professional realm of public relations, best practices answer the question of how practitioners can increase communications outcomes on behalf of clients and organizations. Best practices can be discovered through academic research and theory building. More often, best practices are recognized through professional experiences and judgments (Heath, 2001). The following sections address best practices for higher education public relations and for crisis communication outlined in previous literature.

Higher Education

"Now more than ever, higher education institutions not only must become aware of how many public relations efforts are going on in their respective institutions but also must step back and coordinate those efforts within their structures before going out to external audiences" (DeSanto and Garner, 2001, p. 545). DeSanto and Garner explained how in modern higher education different offices typically handle tasks such as media relations, development, alumni relations, sports information, publications, online communication. Colleges and universities have a special challenge of presenting unified messages that all contribute to the success and sustainability of the institution. These authors said this can be accomplished by engaging in "mutually beneficial negotiation" (p. 545). Seemingly the **mixed motive model** applies best in higher education public relations. The job of a university public relations office is to articulate the unique purpose and self-identity of the institution the office represents. DeSanto and Garner (2001, p. 546) also posed six "hands-on" best practices specific to higher education public relations:

1. working from set goals that synchronized internally to support the overarching institutional short and long-term vision, mission, and goals;
2. identifying and prioritizing key stakeholders for each unit's goals as well as the overall mission of the institution;
3. identifying and building relationships with opinion leaders crucial to the overall success of the institution as well as each unit's success;
4. communicating with one clear institutional voice;
5. conducting and sharing ongoing evaluations with all other relevant institutional units—an ongoing report card that allows corrections and grades; and

6. recognition of public relations as the coordinating force leading to the collaborative effort

Crisis Communication

Kathleen Fearn-Banks (2001) stated that today people are increasingly aware of crises and crisis communication as a business function. Publics demand to know what threats are present and what warning signs or "prodromes" have developed. Stakeholders are keenly tuned into media channels to find company statements and solutions. This modern reality solidifies the absolute necessity for organizational crisis communication planning.

The first best practices recommendation is for the head public relations officer to be a part of the dominant coalition. The dominant coalition should then develop a crisis communication plan that builds relationships with all stakeholders. Stakeholders are identified and ranked through the process of research. Two-way symmetrical communication should be used in building these relationships. The organization must support and encourage crisis preparation and crisis or risk communication tactics should be developed. Crises should be anticipated and planned for accordingly. Lastly, common with many public relations best practices, Fearn-Banks (2001) advocates for an "overall open and honest policy," or transparency at all times (p. 481).

These recommendations are not specific to crisis communication, but are characteristics of stellar public relations programs—programs well suited to effectively handle a crisis. Fearn-Banks (2001) does not mention renewal within these stages, but renewal elements are found throughout her crisis communication best practices recommendations.

Crisis Communication

Crisis communication is a form of public relations geared at specific message dissemination designed to help prevent, manage, or recover from an organizational crisis. Crisis

communication is a practical discipline, relatively new in the scheme of public relations research. Crisis communication is practiced in the public relations profession as a management function. The discipline can be interpreted in various ways.

As noted, scholars indicate that crises affect an organization's everyday equilibrium or status quo. A crisis typically, in the immediate sense, affects an organization negatively (i.e. loss of lives, loss of property or finances, or damaged reputation or credibility). However, the post-crisis phase can present an organization with immense opportunity to recover stronger and more knowledgeable than before the occurrence. Crises provide opportunities for new mutually beneficial relationships to develop between an organization and its publics as well as for a new level of organizational stabilization.

Falkheimer and Heide (2006) presented a social constructionist definition of crisis communication. They said it is a sense-making process where reality is constructed in cultural contexts. Crisis communication aims at lessening negative outcomes from a crisis situation. Crisis communication messaging clearly outlines the actions message receivers or publics should take (Spence, Lachlan, and Griffin, 2007).

Fearn-Banks (2007) explained that "crisis communications…is concerned with the transferring of information to significant persons (publics) to either help avoid a crisis (or negative occurrence), recover from a crisis, and maintain or enhance reputation" (p. 2). This definition provides a comprehensive model for explaining the practice of crisis communication and is thus the guiding definition used in this study.

Crisis communication is typically relegated to a defensive role, where the premise is the need to offset potential negative consequences of not communicating (Sturges, 1994). "Crisis communication should be a part of the larger issues of communication policy and strategy that

may lead to more effective and efficient influence of opinion development among members of publics important to organizations" (Sturges, 1994, p. 297).

The goal of a professional crisis communicator is to help an organization manage and recover from a crisis by weighing communications strategies and tactics as a member of the dominant coalition. The chosen strategies and tactics are implemented as a part of organizational pre- and post-crisis communication plans.

Theory and Practice

Crisis communication is an applied concept in that its theory is based in practice. Practitioners in the management role use academic and professional best practices to help them cope with crises. "Crisis communication is a nexus of praxis where theory and application must intersect" (Coombs, 2010, p. 22). Several strategies and tactics are recommended for crisis communication managers to help their organizations address and recover from crisis through effective discourse. The following theories provide framework for the study and evaluation of crisis communication practices.

In guiding practitioners on what not to do when engaging in crisis communication, Bernstein (2006) advocated for proactive and transparent communication. He listed eleven practices that should be avoided. He does not recommend "Playing Ostrich" or hoping no one notices the problem or keeping "your head buried firmly in the sand" while leaving another part of the organization vulnerable. He said practitioners should not only Work on a Crisis After It's Public as this gives the impression the organization has something to hide. Letting Only Your Reputation Speak for You is another crisis communication "don't." Assuming that good deeds from the past or high organizational name recognition make the company invincible to new bad perceptions is a big mistake. Do Not Treat the Media Like the Enemy and Be Proactive versus

Reactive. Using Language Your Publics Don't Understand is also a mistake. Assuming that "Truth Will Triumph Over All" does not mean that the organization cannot still suffer from this truth. Addressing Only Issues and Ignoring Feelings and Making Only Written Statements are also poor decisions in today's vast media environment. Using diversified media is best. Finally, Using Best Guesses to Assess Damage and Doing the Same Thing Repeatedly and Expecting Different Results should also be avoided (pp. 40-43).

The Crisis Communication Standards is another model that recommends crisis communication managers focus on stating the facts of the crisis before addressing organizational reputation management. Coombs (2004) explained, the "Crisis Communication Standards hold that crisis managers must provide instructing and adjusting information before taking any action designed to address reputational concerns. Crisis managers select crisis response strategies based upon the reputational threat of the crisis" (p. 468).

Additional crisis recovery discourse strategies apply the Crisis Communication Standards model by providing crisis managers specific actions to take in communicating with various publics. Ulmer and Sellnow (2002) say that "organizations that wish to emphasize more positive communication after a crisis must first develop reservoirs of good will with stakeholders" (p. 365). Post-crisis responses are principally framed within the rhetorical tradition of apologia, or a defensive discourse. Apologia focuses on strategic position and is generally viewed as necessary following a crisis to reestablish damaged organizational legitimacy. Organizations often apologize for a crisis. Many crisis communication managers feel this is the most efficient way to return to business as usual. This strategy is only effective in certain situations where the organization is truly at fault (Ulmer and Sellnow, 2002).

Gonzalez-Herrero and Pratt (1996) described an Integrated Symmetrical Model for Crisis-Communications Management. These authors provide a broader definition of crisis management. This model includes addressing any organizational issue, not necessarily a crisis that affects company well-being. Addressing smaller issues can effectively prevent a crisis from developing and increase trust of the organization by various publics. Traditionally issues management requires that organizations look 12 to 36 months into the future, but Gonzalez-Herrero and Pratt suggested the issues management process within a crisis-management approach should be concerned with any issue that may haven any impact on the organization's well-being. Issues management is the first of the four steps in this model. The other three main steps are planning-prevention, crisis, and post-crisis.

Quarantelli (1988) explained several areas that can negatively affect crisis communication management. These include difficulty in maintaining authority, organizational differences and lack of consensus, and lack of communication within organizations. Prior planning can help diffuse these problems, but cannot eliminate them.

Contingency theory proposes going beyond two-way symmetrical communication and other models of public relations. Similar to the aforementioned two-way model of excellent public relations it states that crises specifically can be communicated on a continuum ranging from "pure advocacy" to "pure accommodation." Pure advocacy occurs when an organization only argues its own case and pure accommodation is conceding. Cancel, et. al. (1997) stated that most public relations practitioners consider themselves advocates for their organizations similar to how an attorney advocates for a client. Cancel, et. al. went on to say that advocacy is socially acceptable and necessary in public relations. An accommodator under contingency theory is a "builder of trust" with external publics (p. 36). Some professionals lean more toward

accommodation practices in order to limit the negative image of manipulation that could be perceived by publics under pure advocacy tactics. An organization's place on this continuum can change with each public based on a number of categorized factors (see appendix B) (Pang, et. al., 2010, p. 533). These authors summarize the variables that determine an organization's place on the continuum as external threats, external public characteristics, organizational characteristics, public relations department characteristics, and dominant coalition characteristics (pp. 537-538).

Image restoration discourse theory addresses two specific threats to organizational image. Whether 1) the accused is held responsible for the crisis or 2) the crisis is viewed as offensive, organizations must create discourse or crisis communications messages accordingly. "…The theory of image restoration discourse focuses on message options. In other words, what can a corporation say when faced with a crisis?" (Benoit, 1997, p. 178).

Image restoration discourse theory is composed of five strategies that organizations use to create messages to address responsibility and reduce crisis offensiveness. Benoit and Czerwinski (1997) presented a critical discourse analysis of USAir's image repair after a 1994 plane crash. They examine organizational discourse based on five image repair strategies: denial, evasion of responsibility, reduction of offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification.

Denial allows the organization to simply deny responsibility for the crisis. Sub-categories of denial include simple denial and shifting the blame. Evasion of responsibility is similar to denial, but under this strategy organizations do not officially deny responsibility, they instead avoid addressing the issue. Provocation, defeasibility, accident, and good intentions are sub-categories under the evasion of responsibility strategy. Reduction of offensiveness focuses on reducing the perceived offensiveness of the crisis. Sub-categories under this strategy are bolstering, minimization, differentiation, transcendence, attacking the accuser, and

compensation. Organizations using the corrective action promise to correct the problem. Under the mortification strategy organizations confess guilt and apologize. Organizations using any of these strategies or any combination of them, must decide to do so based on individual organizational circumstances.

Effective crisis communication is an ongoing process. Organizations must continually update crisis communication plans and be prepared to enact them with little to no notice. Addressing and recovering from a broad crisis such as a campus emergency requires even more defined crisis communication strategies and tactics.

University Crisis Communication

Crisis communication theory and strategies can be applied in a number of industries and instances. In recent history, several major crises have arisen in American higher education and these theories that once focused primarily on corporate crises have been necessarily applied in college and university environments. The three crises explained below are representative of the types of crises evaluated in this case study--violence, scandal, and natural disaster.

Elmasry and Chaudhri (2010) studied South Korean news coverage of the murders Seung-Hui Cho committed at Virginia Polytechnic and State University (Virginia Tech) in 2007. The shooter killed 32 people before taking his own life. This was the most deadly incident of school violence in American history. The authors of this study conducted a textual analysis of two newspapers from the shooter's country of origin to determine how these non-American newspapers communicated the crisis. They found that these papers used a variety of image restoration strategies to help repair South Korea's reputation. Specifically the newspapers engaged in the practices of denial, mortification, and reduction of offensiveness by presenting

the shooter as more of a victim. These papers did not want Cho to be viewed as a representative of all South Koreans (pp. 141-146).

Yaeger and Pressler (2007) described the 2006 Duke scandal crisis as a "perfect storm," which they titled the first chapter of their book *It's Not About the Truth: The Untold Story of the Duke Lacrosse Case and the Lives It Shattered*. This storm involved an elite institution, the largely elite sport of lacrosse, wealthy Caucasian lacrosse players, working class African American strippers, power-hungry prosecutors, and a misinformed administration and media.

The 2006 Duke lacrosse team had what was supposed to be a typical party at the residence of team leaders at 610 North Buchanan on the night of March 13, 2006. Two strippers, who were also deemed "hookers" by lacrosse players were invited to this party. Later on that evening, police were called and one stripper was taken to the hospital claiming she was sexually assaulted by several lacrosse players who attended what became known as the "Party at 610." These allegations spurred a devastating series of events.

After the height of this crisis passed, it was found that the accuser was lying. In addition, "in the order of the social universe of Duke undergraduates, the lacrosse players ranked at the top of the dominance of hierarchy," according to Peter J. Boyer of *The New Yorker*. The "players were athletic, smart, and handsome, a trifecta that generated adulation and envy" (Yaeger and Pressler, 2007, p. 4). Add this to the 2006 *Princeton Review* statement that "Duke and Durham have one of the most strained town-gown relationships in the nation," the perfect storm was created (p. 3). This storm's effect on the university was found to not be derived by wrongdoings of the Duke lacrosse players, but by the negative perceptions it stirred. Duke has since recovered from this crisis, but not before suffering reputational damage. Long-standing negative race relations between the university and its community were highlighted on a national scale.

Fortunato (2008) conducted a discourse analysis of Duke's crisis responses and analyzed how they were framed in efforts to restore Duke's reputation. He found that Duke targeted specific publics including the large African American community in Durham and took responsibility for the situation, using corrective action (p. 120).

While the Duke case was a well-publicized scandal crisis, Hurricane Katrina was one of the most devastating natural disasters in history. On August 29, 2005, Category Three Hurricane Katrina with sustained winds of 125 miles per hour caused destruction all along the Gulf Coast of Louisiana and Mississippi and, in some case obliterating communities. Katrina will forever be remembered for the impact it had on New Orleans as a storm surge breached the levee system that protected the city from Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River. About 80 percent of the city was flooded in up to ten feet of water. "New Orleans' levee failures were found to be primarily the result of system design flaws, combined with the lack of adequate maintenance. According to an investigation by the National Science Foundation, those responsible for the conception, design, construction and maintenance of the region's flood-control system apparently failed to pay sufficient attention to public safety" (Discovery Channel, 2011). Over 1 million people were displaced, destruction was estimated at as much as $75 billion, over 1,800 deaths occurred, and much of the city of New Orleans was abandoned as unlivable" (Zdziarski, et.al., 2007, p. 19).

Given the devastation in the City of New Orleans, universities and most other industries had to turn to partners in nearby localities not greatly affected by the storm for assistance. Louisiana State University (LSU), located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the closest major city to New Orleans, served as a refuge, medical facility, and media center for several days after the storm. While the university provided assistance, its Office of Public Affairs conducted a full-

fledged crisis communication campaign that highlighted the various tactics employed by LSU to assist those affected by the storm. The campaign focused primarily on "effectively communicating key messages to internal and external audiences, managing national and international media's needs" as critical information was transmitted, and "managing community relations, services and assistance" (Hendrix and Hayes, 2010, p. 375). These goals were achieved with the use of controlled and uncontrolled media in traditional and new media formats.

The previous review of related literature provides a basis for the scope of this study. The roles of the HBCU communication managers in the time surrounding each crisis are examined. The researcher also examined the daily operations of each university public relations office in the context of established theories and best practices. Lastly, news articles and other documentary evidence were analyzed to determine public perceptions of each crisis as well as the effectiveness of each institution's renewal efforts.

Theoretical Framework

The Discourse of Renewal

The Discourse of Renewal is a relatively new crisis communication theory that is developed from Image Restoration Discourse Theory. Discourse of Renewal theory, developed by Ulmer and Sellnow (2002) and expanded by Ulmer, Seeger, and Sellnow (2007), is solely focused on the communication of recovery and organization renewal after a crisis. A new organizational outlook is often required after a crisis occurs. Publics often respond positively to an organization that communicates new business standards through crisis preparedness. "Crisis communication research should not only focus on inherent threat, but should also consider the potential opportunities embedded in these events" (Ulmer, Sellnow and Seeger, 2010, p. 691). Discourse of renewal aims at helping organizations to restore positive image. Coombs (2010)

said discourse of renewal is separated from corporate apologia and image restoration theory because it emphasizes positivity in terms of the organization's future instead of dwelling in present and focusing on responsibility for the crisis. The discourse of renewal has added an innovative perspective to case study research. Researchers talk with the people involved in the crisis to get the crisis managers' insights into the communicative process" (p. 32-33). These cases offer some unique insights into how crisis managers view the process. Crisis management decision-making is also viewed more clearly through these studies.

The discourse of renewal emphasizes post-crisis innovation and adaptation within an organization. Post-crisis communication has been explored using a framework of renewal in a variety or a broader framework of organizational crises. (Ulmer, Seeger, and Sellnow, 2007). "While image restoration focuses on explaining and interpreting what has happened and who is at fault, renewal is concerned with what will happen and how the organization will move forward" (p. 132).

Post-crisis or renewal discourse has four primary factors. Ulmer, Seeger, and Sellnow (2007), the originators of this theory, explained these characteristics. All decisions in the renewal phase must emanate from good character and exhibit a forward-thinking perspective. The organization must also be able to focus on opportunities embedded in the crisis and organizational leadership must be instrumental in the renewal process.

The organization must reject retrospective thinking, implicitly or explicitly, and immediately begin rebuilding (Seeger and Griffin Padgett, 2010). A vision for the future of the organization must focus on engaging publics. Good will and public support for the organization post-crisis are used to leverage progress in renewal. Organizations must quickly overcome the inherent threat from a crisis. Crises create space and opportunity for organizations and

communities to reformulate themselves without previous historical limitations or constraints. Organizations can engage in post-crisis rebirth by capitalizing on the opportunities for institutional improvement that arise from a crisis. Public relations and legal professionals are often trained to create and release strategic and ambiguous statements in order to limit organizational liability. The discourse of renewal, however, focuses on a more natural and transparent instinct to rebuild. This instinct is typically based on the vision of a charismatic leader. Such leaders engage their institutions in embracing the vision to recover and progress from a crisis. Strategic and provisional responses are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but the latter are more immediate and authentic. Lastly, "covenant renewal discourse is characterized by a recommitment to core defining values" (Seeger and Griffin Padgett, 2010, p. 137). The rich culture, resilience, and family-like values of HBCUs are prime building blocks for renewal.

Researchers have also established four criteria necessary in order for renewal to be enacted: 1) the organization must have maintained a highly ethical reputation pre-crisis; 2) pre-crisis relationships between the organization and its publics must be strong; 3) the organization must be able to focus on life post-crisis and not be focused on blame for the crisis; and 4) the organization must have a genuine desire in engaging in effective crisis communication (Coombs, 2010). Engaging stakeholders or publics in optimism is key. These organizations must also be able to assure their stakeholders or publics that the institution is prepared to avoid or positively respond to future crises.

The discourse of renewal focuses on optimism and organizational growth. Ulmer, Sellnow and Seeger (2010) outlined four theoretical objectives key to the practice of the discourse of renewal: organizational learning, ethical communication, a prospective and not retrospective outlook, and positive rhetoric. Capitalizing on opportunities is essential for

organizations implementing post-crisis renewal. This type of messaging involves focusing on new starts, growth, and sense of purpose.

Transparent communication is needed in order for the communication to be ethical. First, stakeholders must not be coerced. Organizational decisions must be made using all available information and all reasonable alternatives must be considered. Short and long-term consequences must also be considered. Also, message senders and receivers who have decision-making influence must disclose any personal motives. It is also advised that provisional rather than strategic communication be used when implementing the discourse of renewal to avoid the appearance of "spin." Provisional communication involves conveying messages driven by a greater vision to move forward. This practice of using provisional communication differentiates the discourse of renewal from the other crisis communication theoretical approaches.

Positive organizational rhetoric involves the presence of a charismatic leader who can embrace the crisis and inspire others to move forward. The discourse of renewal is largely a leader-based practice, because leaders such as HBCU presidents are essential in structuring reality for an organization's publics. Leaders must motivate stakeholders and publics to engage in renewal and remain committed to the process (Ulmer, Sellnow and Seeger, 2010).

The discourse of renewal is an appropriate theoretical basis for these case studies because corporate crisis communication strategies do not apply well in the educational sector. Also, very little blame was placed on the universities for these crises. Each institution is primarily and highly focused on learning from its respective crisis and continuing to thrive with the full support of each public involved. Additionally, the dynamic and thoroughly experienced presidential leadership at the HBCUs featured in this study are well placed to allow these institutions to fully engage in renewal. As each university continuously strives to restore and improve its image in

the immediate years post-crisis, discourse and actions focused on renewal must be made prominent.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

The following research questions are designed to guide the data analysis and presentation of this study. Each question represents a discourse of renewal factor and in answering each question the researcher examined how each university demonstrated each component of the theory. The primary aim of these questions as a whole is to shed light on each HBCU crisis and to utilize primary and secondary data to develop a best practices model for HBCU crisis communication and continued renewal.

R_1: How did each university utilize prospective post-crisis discourse?

This question is relevant because the presence and use of forward thinking vision and language demonstrates the basis for renewal. Other renewal factors and processes depend on this initial step. It is almost important to understand the level of prospective thinking and conveyance of opinion by each HBCU public relations director.

R_2: What opportunities arose as a result of each university crisis and how did each institution seize these opportunities?

This question helps analyze the essential next step in the discourse of renewal process. In order to fully have engaged in renewal each university must have recognized and seized learning and rebuilding opportunities post-crisis. How each university implemented lessons learned in terms of organizational recovery, public relations practice, and stewardship is a key element in fulfilling the overarching purpose of this study.

R_3: How did each HBCU use provisional discourse in order to rebuild or restore order post-crisis?

This question largely examines the role and especially the vision of the university presidents in the post-crisis renewal processes. It is understood and explained via categorical analysis that each university had to engage in certain strategic and tactical practices in order to immediately manage the crisis situation and communicate with stakeholders and publics. However, the vision to emerge as a more effective and stronger institution post-crisis and the implementation of such vision is crucial to understanding the full picture of renewal implemented by each university.

R_4: How did institutional or overall HBCU values drive the renewal process?

As noted, each university in this study has a rich and diverse history and is built upon long-standing values. This question examines how university missions and HBCU values helped to lead renewal efforts. This question also addresses stewardship and the involvement of the HBCU community as a key public in the HBCU village.

R_5: What best practices emerge from this data regarding how each institution and other HBCUs might better engage in the discourse of renewal?

This question allows for cross-case analysis of the discourse of renewal practices. The most successful elements and practices are highlighted in the results of this section. Additionally, gaps or areas for improvement in HBCU renewal discourse are addressed here in a manner that provides practical guidance for practitioners, students, and scholars. The results presented in this section are guided not only by case data, but also by existing public relations and crisis communication best practices models.

The primary rationale behind the aforementioned questions is to gather information about the post-crisis communication efforts following each crisis in order to provide insight into HBCU public relations in times of calm, in times of crisis, and in times of crisis recovery. The primary post-crisis discourse will be determined for each university based on interviews and documentation evidence.

Methodology

Introduction

This study employs qualitative descriptive case study research using semi-structured in-depth interviews and document analysis. The researcher's purpose is to identify how public relations directors and administration at three Historically Black Universities implemented the elements of the discourse of renewal and to determine best practices for HBCU post-crisis communication. Qualitative research requires piecing together a variety of observations of a specific situation creating a product of new knowledge (Mills, 1959). The purpose is to examine a large, complex human phenomenon or a very individualized occurrence and to use the findings to simplify or explain the phenomenon or occurrence to general audiences.

The researcher examines three Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) that have experienced a crisis in the last five years. Qualitative research was selected as the best avenue to study the crisis communication efforts of the universities because the uncertain nature of a crisis and the personal experiences gained from these situations cannot be fully described using numerical representation or quantitative research. Several qualitative methods can be used to dramatize, operationalize, symbolize, and better understand meaning of various aspects of a culture. Flexible, yet rigorous qualitative research is most appropriate for delving into meanings of social realities (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002).

Researching managed communication of an organization requires investigators to examine the information from the perspective of the participants instead of applying the researcher's own conceptions. This research is most often conducted in the natural environment of the participants to enable the researcher to examine routines and culture first-hand. The subjectivity employed by the participants and the researcher are precisely what provide the strength of qualitative research (Daymon and Holloway, 2011).

The discovery of important practices and meanings in the culture of study is a mandatory milestone in truly gaining understanding of this culture. Properly placing these meanings and symbols is essential. Mills (1959) compared qualitative researchers to quilt-makers or jazz improvisationists, in that this type of research involves creating a new product from already existing elements or knowledge. Once understanding is gained, the qualitative researcher must take time to explain how each meaning or practice or value is applied within the culture and within larger society. The broad picture that is painted can be influential in promoting cross-cultural understanding. In this instance each campus and HBCUs as a whole are their own cultures. The deeply interpretive nature of qualitative research is necessary in studying communication relationships that are inseparable from the social and historical contexts in which these relationships occur (Daymon and Holloway, 2011).

Qualitative researchers have a fundamental of presenting and analyzing social experiences and content. The process of conducting qualitative research allows for the broadest and most inclusive examination of specific phenomena, documenting these phenomena in detail (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). It is common for qualitative researchers to juxtapose images of social life into a larger narrative. Special consideration is given to underrepresented elements of social life (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002).

As noted, HBCUs have a unique history in the larger scope of American higher education and currently, they still deal with underlying stereotypes and discrimination. Also, the sensitive nature of any crisis situation requires an examination of the "big picture." These crises need to be evaluated for their overall impact as well as for the details that make these occurrences special. Therefore, qualitative approaches are the most appropriate to use in exploring these institutional crises.

Approaches

This study, in line with most public relations research, implements an applied communication approach. Applied qualitative research allows for the intersection of theory, method, action, and policy (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The purpose of this type of research is to assist real-world individuals and organizations to practically diagnose and find solutions to best achieve communication goals. A unique collaboration between researchers and clients characterizes this applied approach (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002).

A pragmatic and interpretive approach is also utilized in this study. Greene (1998) described four philosophical frameworks for collecting and interpreting data: postpositivism, pragmatism, interpretivism, and critical. The postpositive approach promotes the key values of accountability and quantitative experiments are the preferred method for carrying out this framework. The critical framework focuses on social change and calls for mixed method and historical research designs. This study is primarily pragmatic because the research seeks to promote the key values of management practicality, quality control, and utility. The pragmatic approach allows for an eclectic mix of research methods to be applied in finding which program areas need improvement in terms of meeting organizational goals and satisfying the needs of publics. The interpretive approach also applies to this study in that the research has ideals of promoting understanding and diversity in the area of university and especially HBCU post-crisis

communication. Within the interpretive paradigm researchers gain empathetic insight into the attitudes of the actors. This insight is called *verstehen* and is composed of conceptual categories that lead to an empirical reality (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The actors in this study are the interview participants who are responsible for the public relations function at their respective universities. The interpretive research method used in this study is the case study method, employing interview and documentation evidence.

Case Study Method

To examine the previously outlined HBCU crises the researcher conducted three separate case studies as part of this overall case study of HBCU post-crisis communication efforts. The cases in this study were chosen based on personal and professional connections held by the researcher. Don Stacks (2011), in his *Primer of Public Relations Research*, described case studies as a method of qualitative research. Case studies are in-depth analyses of specific people, processes, events or organizations. They describe the object of study in rich detail. "In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon with some real-life context" (Yin, 2003, p. 1). This definition describes precisely the case study method used in this study.

Case studies provide holistic examination of a phenomenon using multiple sources of evidence. These studies are bound by time and place within a specific social context and this distinguishes case study research from other methodological approaches (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). The primary aim of a communications case study is to provide knowledge about contemporary events while offering insight for wider relevance. This case study is presented using in-depth interviews and document review and analysis to discover how three

HBCUs implemented the discourse of renewal from the time immediately post-crisis through the present.

A responsible focus on the priorities of practitioners within a bounded case not only allows for rich understanding, but also provides a basis for naturalistic generalization. Improvement of practice is the primary goal of a case study. The products of experiencing a phenomenon also help individuals or organizations outside of the case examined to derive tacit knowledge (Greene, 1998).

"To a remarkable degree, the profession of public relations understands itself through case studies. Both practitioners and educators treat cases as the condensed wisdom of the profession" (Pauly and Hutchison, 2001, p. 381). Public relations case study researchers can apply techniques used in other disciplines in order to enhance the profession. Researchers can act as a sociologist and reflect on theoretical or rhetorical claims when investigating a case. Public relations cases can also reflect those written in the medical professions by placing a problem within a larger sense of practices and precedents. Practitioners in public relations can, like business and legal practitioners, also learn how to work more effectively by reflecting on case studies that integrate theory into practice. The goal of a public relations case study is to analyze the theoretical significance of selected professional activities within the proper historical or social context. A case study in public relations deepens knowledge of its specific area of communication practice (Pauly and Hutchinson, 2001).

Yin (2003) outlined three strategies for conducting case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Exploratory case studies are typically pilot studies that precede more formal social science research. Explanatory case studies allow for widely generalizable results through casual investigation. Descriptive case studies require the researcher to begin with a descriptive theory that covers the depth and scope of the study. A descriptive case study traces interpersonal

events over a period of time and discovers relevant phenomena that describe a rarely studied subculture (Yin, 2003; Tellis 1997a; Tellis 1997b).

This is a descriptive multiple case study following a liner-analytic structure. Descriptive case study materials are organized and presented in the context of a specific theoretical proposition at points throughout the research product. The discourse renewal serves as theoretical framework for this case (Strauss, 1987). The linear-analytic structure calls for the sequencing of subtopics explaining the issue under study. A review of relevant existing literature and the findings from data collected allow for conclusions and implications to be drawn. This structure is applicable to descriptive as well as exploratory and explanatory case study strategies (Yin, 2003). Each HBCU crisis under study in this project serves as an individual case contributing to the overall purpose of the complete case.

Multiple or collective case studies of two or more in public relations allow the researcher to identify distinctive features by comparing and contrasting individual cases. Presenting more than four cases is not recommended because this can diminish the value of the case study method by limiting detail in each individual case and thus diluting the overall analysis (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). A collective case study requires the researcher to give a detailed description of each case, to identify themes within the individual cases, and then analyze these themes across cases. The final step is to provide overall interpretation together with "lessons learned" or best practices (Daymon and Holloway, 2011).

Multiple case studies also provide triangulation, explained below, increasing the reliability and validity of this qualitative method. Reliability demonstrates that the operations of a study can be repeated by the original or another researcher. To ensure reliability (Yin, 2003) recommends following a case study protocol, keeping a case study database, and maintaining a

chain of evidence. The work should be auditable much like an accountant's calculations could be audited.

Qualitative data used in this study including in-depth interview audio recordings, interview transcripts, news articles, and press releases discussing each crisis are available so that an audit trail may be conducted should another researcher wish to replicate this study. The audit trail helps demonstrate rigor in qualitative research. It shows that the data was properly analyzed and synthesized. A reviewer can trace the sources of the data. (Wolf, 2003).

Collective case studies must also follow a certain protocol to achieve reliability as follows (Tellis, 1997b):

- **An overview of the case study project** - this will include project objectives, case study issues, and presentations about the topic under study
- **Field procedures** - reminders about procedures, credentials for access to data sources, location of those sources
- **Case study questions** - the questions that the investigator must keep in mind during data collection
- **A guide for the case study report** - the outline and format for the report.

The protocol for this study is outlined throughout this chapter. A case study database includes the auditable evidentiary data described above and the actual research report. The complete chain of evidence includes the case study database, citations to specific sources within the database, and the case study protocol including research questions (Yin, 2003).

Researchers must avoid construct validity problems by identifying specific changes to be studied and relate these changes to the overall purpose of the case. Construct validity establishes correct operational measures for a case study. Also, the measurement of these changes, coding and categorization in this case explained subsequently, must reflect the topic of study. Internal

validity or distinguishing how casual or spurious relationships lead to conditions is only a concern for explanatory case studies and thus does not apply to this descriptive study. External validity establishes a domain in which the findings of a case study can be generalized. Case studies rely on analytical generalization where the researcher relates or generalizes results to a broader theory, discourse of renewal in this case. Replication logic is applied to achieve external validity in multiple case studies. This allows the researcher to cumulate knowledge across cases (Yin, 2003).

The researcher also used triangulation to achieve broader and more conclusive results. Triangulation involves using more than one source of evidence within a case study in different combinations in order to demonstrate qualitative rigor (Fontana and Frey, 1998). Lindlof and Taylor (2002) define triangulation as comparing two or more forms of evidence. "If data from two or more methods seem to converge on a common explanation, the biases of individual methods are thought to 'cancel out' and validation of the claim is enhanced" (p. 240). In this case the triangulated sources of evidence are in-depth interviews and documentation review.

Evidence

Interviews

Interviewing dates back as early as ancient Egyptian times as this culture is credited with first conducting population censuses. Charles Booth is recognized as the first to use interviews to study social phenomena. In the late 1800s he conducted a comprehensive economic and social study of the residents of London. He triangulated his study by combining interviews with ethnography and survey research (Fontana and Frey, 1998).

Qualitative interviewing today is "particularly well suited to understand the social actor's experience and perspective" (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The truth of a particular speaker or interview participant is examined in the context of a matrix of information about the interview

event. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) outline the purposes of qualitative interviewing. First, the researcher gains an understanding the participant's experience through explanations and concepts of communication. Language used by social actors is observed in natural settings allowing information gathering that cannot be effectively achieved by other means. Inquiry about past occurrences while verifying and validating information from external sources and efficient data collection are also important elements of qualitative interviewing. Interview researchers must be skilled conversationalists who have or are able to build a comfortable rapport with the interview participants, allowing for more free-flowing discussion. Today, recording interviews has become commonplace and this practice has significantly increased the accuracy of interview analysis. Some participants may be uncomfortable with recording devices, however (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The researcher in this case study was fortunate in that all participants willingly agreed to be digitally recorded and were not at all hesitant to give full accounts of the crises experienced by the participants' respective universities.

Fontana and Frey (1998) said that interviewing is very common and has a wide variety of uses for qualitative research across disciplines such as mass communication, education, and sociology. It is also a useful way to understand other human beings. The in-depth interview is one type of interview. The goal of these interviews for this project was to get as close to the phenomenon as possible by getting the participants' interpretation of the crisis they experienced. Interviewers must be creatively similar to conducting an oral history.

Yin (2003) described interviews as one of the most important sources of case study information. These guided conversations, different from structured queries, require the researcher to follow a line of questioning guided by the case study protocol and to ask questions in an unbiased conversational manner. In this type of interview participants are asked to recount facts of the case as well as his or her opinion about the events. Participants may also refer the

researcher to other potential interviewees or other sources of evidence. As explained below, the researcher in this case was referred to two additional interviewees from the original sources and the researcher was provided with documentary sources including press releases, news clippings, evaluation reports, and university publications.

Qualitative research in public relations is primarily associated with interviewing (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Each interview differs from the next. In qualitative interviewing the researcher allows participants' responses to guide subsequent questioning either along the same lines or following a tangent line. Key features and benefits of interviews are that that they are flexible and allow for understanding of the participants' perspectives within a certain social context. The semi-structured form of interviewing used in this study focused on discourse renewal topic areas within an HBCU context. An interview guide was used in each interview conducted by the researcher in this case. Interview guides in public relations research may contain a degree of detail, but do not need to be strictly followed. The interview guide found in appendix A allowed the researcher flexibility to carry out a guided conversation with participants while ensuring the collection of similar data from each individual (Daymon and Holloway, 2011).

Documentation

In addition to interviews, the researcher in this study used documentation to expand the results of each case and the overall case study. The documents analyzed and explained below were obtained either from interview participants or via Internet search by the research for major multi-format media coverage of each crisis. Each crisis received a significant amount of regional and national media attention. Coverage of each crisis by major news organizations (i.e. *USA Today, NPR,* or the *Houston Chronicle*) across the print, broadcast, and online formats was chosen to display the magnitude of each crisis and to provide a representation of all media

coverage of each event. In this case the researcher analyzed press releases, news articles and university publications.

Documents are important in qualitative research because they are obtainable at low cost and as noted they provide verification of spoken evidence. They are also sustainable and can offer historical insight. Documents are close to speech and require contextual interpretation such as the theoretical and HBCU interpretations applied in this case. Similar to interviews, document research requires the researcher to draw analogies between different documentary examples. Documents must also be evaluated in the proper context, allowing the researcher to compare similarities and differences and determine relevance to theory and practice (Hodder, 1998).

The most significant use of documents in case studies is the corroboration and augmentation of other evidence sources. Documents must be collected and searched strategically because they play an explicit role in case study data collection. Case study researchers must carefully examine documents in the context of the objectives for which the documents were written or produced (Yin, 2003). Yin (2003) also specifically stated that newspaper accounts are excellent sources especially in combination with personal participation in reconstructing reality.

Participant Selection

The HBCU crises examined in this study were selected based on the researcher's personal knowledge of each of the universities as well as the prominent national news coverage each crisis drew. The researcher is an alumna of Hampton University and is a former employee of the Hampton University Office of University Relations and the current director of this office is the researcher's former supervisor. Before the start of this study, the researcher had experience interviewing the director of communications at Texas Southern University for another purpose and the research reignited this working relationship in order to secure an interview for this study. The researcher's committee chairperson is a former co-worker of the associate vice president of

university and media relations at Xavier University of Louisiana and the chairperson helped the researcher to make initial contact. Each director was initially contacted in early fall 2010 via their assigned university email address. These initial pitch emails contained a brief description of the researcher's study and a casual mention of the researcher's connection with that particular director or university. Once the interviewees agreed to participate, the researched followed up with each participant via telephone to schedule the formal interviews.

Process

Before beginning the formal research process, the researcher completed and passed the National Institute of Health (NIH) Human Subjects Training and gained approval for the study from the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see appendix C). The researcher interviewed the public relations director at each institution about the actual crisis and his or her respective university's post-crisis communications responses. Directors were interviewed in their campus offices (in Hampton, Virginia; Houston, Texas; and New Orleans, Louisiana), as to have them recount the events and practices in a similar environment as the crisis. All interviews were conducted between October and December 2010. The digitally recorded audio interviews were professionally and digitally transcribed for a fee the researcher paid. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) encouraged researchers who choose to take advantage of the timesaving value of professional transcription to, along with rates, check the transcriber's background and references. They also recommend reading and correcting of the transcripts by the researcher for verification and to reconnect the researcher to the data. The professional used to transcribe the digitally recorded interview data in this case was vetted and referred by the researcher's university. Once the professional completed transcripts, the researcher compared the recordings to the transcripts and filled in the few necessary gaps where the transcriptionist could not understand the audio.

The three public relations directors were interviewed along with one additional staff member at TSU and at Xavier. The public relations departmental directors at TSU and at Xavier referred the additional public relations employees to the researcher for interview. All of the public relations directors are African American and range from early to late middle age. The directors at Hampton and TSU are female and the Xavier communications director is male. Each interviewee held at least a bachelor's degree in a communications-related field and had several years of communications work experience. They all started their careers as professional journalists.

The face-to-face in-depth interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes and the questions were semi-structured and primarily open-ended. The researcher allowed the interviewee to introduce themselves and the crisis situation and the researched followed up with questions pre-written and approved by the researcher's doctoral committee (see appendix A). Each public relations director and staff interviewee was asked to explain his or her opinion of his or her personal role and the role of the public relations office in the context of daily university operations and in terms of communication the respective crisis incidents. These roles consisted of a combination of manager and technician duties. Interview subjects were also asked to evaluate whether or not public relations or the public relations director is part of their university's dominant coalition, in times of crisis and otherwise.

These questions were formulated based on the researcher's quest to gain adequate data to answer the previously stated research questions. Certain questions were also derived from best practices and common communication mistakes found in crisis communication literature as well as the contingency and discourse of renewal primary factors. The questions were asked in no particular order. Instead, the researcher allowed the interview to flow more like a casual conversations; and questions not answered during the dialogue were asked or clarified near the

end of each interview. At the end of each interview, the interviewee was given an opportunity to provide any additional details they felt were relevant. The researcher interjected other questions as they arose throughout each interview discussion. Three follow-up interviews were also conducted, one for each public relations director, for clarification and elaboration. Each director also provided the researcher with either hardcopy or digital documentation materials.

Analysis

Once all interviews and transcriptions were completed and all documents were collected, the researcher initially conducted categorization of the data. Categorization is the process of inductively identifying large sections of data such as passages of text as representing a general phenomenon. The actual category is the overarching term for any key themes, concepts, or constructs (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The categories developed in this case represent the similarities and differences found within the data across all three studies. These categories further outlined in the results section of this study not only represent comparisons of post-crisis communication implemented by each university, but the public relations directors' accounts of the crises and the general characteristics and day-to-day practices of each public relations office.

The researcher then conducted a secondary and more in-depth analysis of coding the data. *In vivo* codes were applied to the data in this case. This type of coding is representative of the language used by the social actors in a case or the interviewees. The researcher uses specific interviewee accounts throughout each case. "These instances of vivid language not only anchor conceptual categories, they also serve as category names and supply quotes for the research narrative" (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002, p. 220). These codes explain the process of how the actors resolved problems, or engaged in the discourse of renewal in this case. In vivo codes are analytic, illustrate imagery with a dataset, and are associated with theory (Strauss, 1987). The In vivo codes used in this case represent the factors of the discourse of renewal and subsequently

the research questions of this study. Data were considered as renewal discourse if the evidence included any form of post-crisis discussion about university renewal, rebuilding, or sustainability. The four code names used by the researcher represent shortened versions of the discourse of renewal factors: prospective focus, opportunities, provisional responses, and core values.

The researcher used the *NVivo* qualitative data analysis PC-based computer program to further analyze and code data. Code-and-retrieve and code-based theory builder programs such as *NVivo* permit various ways of not only coding, but also grouping and categorizing large amounts of text (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). The software was used primarily to conduct Boolean searches of all five interview transcripts for terms representing each discourse of renewal factor or code name. The key words used to code data in *NVivo* and by-hand were derived from the researcher's initial readings and observations of the data as well as the researcher's personal knowledge of each crisis and HBCU environments. Key words used to code for prospective focus were renewal, rebuilding, recovery, and future. The word opportunity was the only key word searched for under the opportunity code. Provisional responses key words were vision, president; Harvey, Rudley, Francis (the last names of the presidents of the three HBCUs in this study); and goals. Values, history, tradition, safety, standards, and reputation served as key words for the core values code. The results of these searches helped the researcher to better classify and understand how and which interview responses fit into each code. These searches also produced percentages of the use of each key word or synonym, illustrating how and how often each interviewee used renewal language. The researcher then produced graphic representations of these results. The research found via Internet research and trial-and-error that the multimedia capable *NVivo* program offers the most user-friendly and robust qualitative data analysis among programs available.

To ensure the researcher stayed closely attentive to the data, for balance, and for further triangulation of data analysis, the researcher coded the documentation evidence by-hand for the same key words and discourse of renewal codes. In addition to the 90 pages of in-depth interview transcripts, a total of 62 documents were analyzed. This includes 38 news and feature articles, seven press releases, six university publications including brochures and annual reports, three mission statements, three *YouTube* videos, two communications evaluation matrices, one vision statement, one speech transcript, and one online journal. The coded interview data and examples of documentation data are presented in the following results section as answers to the research questions of this study. Full documentation data is provided in appendix D.

The findings of this study are presented as answers to each research question in narrative form. The researcher allowed each participant to tell his or her own story, to create individual narratives while the researcher interjected details, linkages, and context. Allowing each participant to create his or her own narrative allows for the vivid and personalized accounts of events that create the thorough and descriptive nature of qualitative research. At the beginning of each individual university case, the researcher selected and highlighted a powerful quote from the participant that sums up the crisis atmosphere. In addition to these narratives, the researcher has included in study graphic images of select media, further describing each university crisis and environment.

The researcher searched for the overall narrative disseminated by each university regarding post-crisis communication. The researcher sought to find how each university was prepared for and handled crisis response tasks, how the public relations offices and directors function within each university, and primarily how each university implemented the discourse of renewal. Lessons learned from each university based on each director's evaluation and the researcher's findings were used to develop the discourse of renewal best practices model.

Existing public relations and crisis communication best practices models also served as a guide. After conducting this overall analysis the researcher has constructed a list of common occurrences and characteristics of HBCU public relations offices useful to public relations students and scholars, aspiring HBCU public relations practitioners, and journalists who cover or communicate with HBCUs. The best practices model for post-crisis discourse of renewal can be used by the HBCUs in this study and by other HBCUs or other institutions.

Grounded Practical Theory

Grounded Practical Theory (GPT) (Craig & Tracy, 1995) is concerned with how communication acts should be performed. Essentially, this theory aims to develop best practices. This theory provides the basis for Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis, the primary method of analysis used in this study explained below. This practically-based theory provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on their actions and apply what they have learned. The GPT approach not only explains the actions under study, but contributes to the evaluation of such actions while offering perspectives for future practice. Craig (1989) noted that communication is a practical discipline and stated the central purpose should be "to cultivate communicative praxis, or practical art, through critical study" (p. 98).

Craig's (1995) study introducing GPT described practical theory as "rational reconstruction of practice" (p. 252). The purpose of rational reconstruction is to construct a revisable model tested by its usefulness in practice and reflection. Practical theory is reconstructed on three levels: the technical level, the problem level, and the philosophical level. The technical level and most concrete level addresses specific communication strategies and tactics. The problem level examines problems that affect communication practice. Practitioners reflect on these problems, or the crises in this case and how these problems affect strategic action at the technical level. The philosophical level is the most abstract and focuses on ideals or

overarching principles that provide rationale for problem solving (Craig, 1995). In this case, the philosophical level is represented by the discourse of renewal factors.

Discourse Analysis

This study employs a discourse-analytic approach to data evaluation. Discourse analysis emerged as a field of study in the 1960s and 1970s. It is an interdisciplinary method of analysis used across the humanities and social sciences in studies such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and mass communication (van Dijk, 1991).

Daymon and Holloway (2011, p. 166) provided a definition for the concept of discourse:

> Discourse is a way of talking or writing about something to make it meaningful. It is underpinned by assumptions about what we know to be 'true' with regard to how we conduct ourselves, what and how we communicate, and what we understand. Although language is a major feature of discourse, a discourse is more than language because it constitutes, or produces, a particular view of reality.

Discourse is also defined in terms of two paradigms: structural and functional. The structural paradigm focuses on a particular unit of language. Functional discourse, in contrast focuses on the actual use of language (Schiffrin, 1994). Data analysis in this study largely follows the functional paradigm in that the overall crisis communication cases are evaluated in the context of HBCUs and codes broadly examine the use of the discourse of renewal. Schiffrin (1994, p. 21) describes the characteristics of each paradigm (Table 2).

Discourse analysis is a type of textual analysis that enables the researcher to examine the tone of a text based on actual content. In media studies, discourse analysis has been accepted as an alternative or addition to the more popular content analysis based on van Dijk's (1991) perception of this approach. Content analysis quantifies specific word use and other frequencies, but discourse analysis allows the researcher more freedom to examine and analyze the meaning of the text or the intent its author. Discourse analysis in today's environment can also be used to examine the overall dynamics of a given text. Conducting textual discourse analysis can help

lead to a discovery of the social context of a given text. Fish (1980) encouraged those engaging in discourse analysis to act as interpreters for an institution or a community. Discourse analysis accesses archives of information and evaluates the data in terms of exemplary communication practice (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002).

TABLE 2
STRUCTURAL V. FUNCTIONAL DISCOURSE PARADIGMS

STRUCTURAL PARADIGM	**FUNCTIONAL PARADIGM**
Structure of language (code) as grammar	Structure of speech (act, event) as ways of speaking
Use merely implements possible correlations analyzed in a code; analysis of code prior to analysis of use	Analysis of use prior to analysis of code; organization of use discloses additional features and relations; shows code and use in integral relation
Referential function, fully semanticized uses as norm	Gamut of stylistic or social functions
Elements and structures analytically arbitrary (in cross-cultural or historical perspective), or universal (in theoretical perspective)	Elements and structures as ethnographically appropriate
Functional (adaptive) equivalence of languages; all languages essentially or potentially equal	Functional (adaptive) differentiation of languages, varieties, styles; these being existentially not necessarily equivalent
Single homogeneous code and community (replication of uniformity)	Speech community as a matrix of code-repertoires, or speech styles (organization of diversity)
Fundamental concepts, such as speech community, speech act, fluent speaker, functions of speech and of languages, taken for granted or arbitrarily postulated	Fundamental concepts taken as problematic and to be investigated

In terms of data, the term discourse is used to broadly describe spoken and written language as it relates to social interaction. Interviews and documents can be used to analyze intertextual relationships. “To discourse analysts, talk is much more than, and more interesting than, the mere words that are produced. Talk is a window to deeper understanding of how people negotiate the exchange of information, establish, support or destroy relationships, accomplish

tasks, and generally interact with one another" (Driscoll, 2002, pp. 110-111). Driscoll (2002) went on to say that discourse analysts infer goals by examining links between talk, action, and intention. Discourse analysis focuses on an entire discursive event, or case, rather than dissecting individual parts of speech.

> Within discourse analysis sampling different groups that participate within a given discourse can illuminate the ways in which participants appeal to external discourses and identify their influence on the discourse under study. Sample size depends on the analytic objective and the data source. For example, it is possible to use a single person's narrative and compare it with written documents; alternatively, larger sample sizes might be required to understand variations in language-in-use across persons and settings (Starks and Brown Trinidad, 2007, p. 1375).

Discourse analysis differs from traditional grounded theory, where researchers continuously recruit participants with varying experiences until saturation is reached. This is done in effort to construct theory. This is not to be confused with GPT, which actually uses discourse analytic techniques to discover best practices. Figure 3 represents the similarities and differences between discourse analysis and other qualitative methods of analysis.

Culturally focused discourse analyses such as this study require strategically and effectively selection of information relevant to comprehending the discourse. The strategies used may be speaker or researcher oriented. In fact, the "two perspectives will coincide: speaker and hearer belong to the same culture of the same time period" (van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983, p. 80). In this case study, the researcher's professional experience as a former HBCU public relations staff member and student allowed for greater understanding of the context of each crisis and interpretation of data.

This study utilizes transcripts and documents across three universities to gain big-picture understand of HBCU crisis communication and renewal. In their book, *Qualitative Research Methods in Public Relations and Marketing Communications*, Daymon and Holloway (2011)

state that discourse analyses are "not dependent on sample size" (p. 171). Although rare, certain classic studies only analyze a single text. Discourse analysts should be guided by research questions and the amount of data accessible.

In this case, all of the public relations managers directly involved in the crisis and post-crisis communication were interviewed. In fact, at Xavier University the two personnel interviewed were the only staff working immediately after Hurricane Katrina, as other staff members were either displaced or laid off. Texas Southern did not have any public relations representation at the height of the crisis. At Hampton, the director of university relations was the only employee responsible for managing the crisis communication effort. The collateral data such as mission and vision statements, publications, and video gathered and examined represent all of the university-generated publications that directly address the respective crises. In total, each crisis generated thousands of media hits as found by the researcher from August 2010 to July 2011, but the vast majority of news coverage cited the *Associated Press* and featured repetitive text. The crises generated nearly 150,000; 6,000; and 33,000 hits for the Hampton, TSU, and Xavier incidents, respectively. Media examples analyzed and presented in this study represent the unique local and national coverage of each crisis across each medium. Daymon and Holloway (2011) went on to say that even a few documents or transcripts are likely to reveal a large number of patterns.

Motion and Weaver's (2005) discourse analysis of a public relations campaign analyzed three documents: one media kit and two newspaper advertorials. These texts were chosen because they represented the scope the discourse of the communication plan. These authors analyzed the discourse in the political, historical, economic, and social context of New Zealand, the focal community of their study (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Similarly, this study analyzes

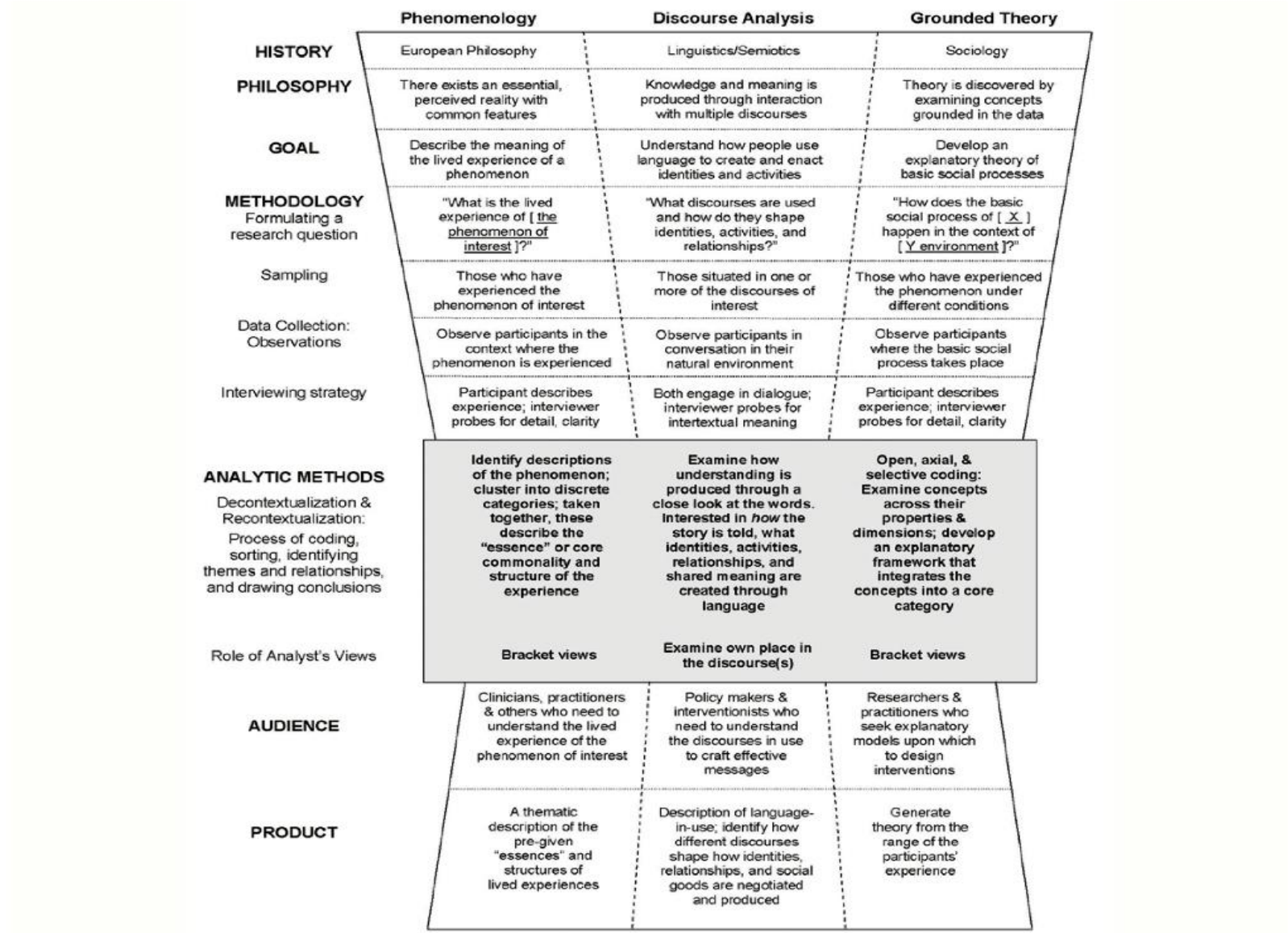


FIGURE 3
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ANALYTIC APPROACHES
(Starks and Brown Trinidad, 2007, p. 1373)

post-crisis communication of three institutions in the context that situates HBCUs in American higher education.

Discourses used in public relations practice can only be fully understood in relation to the contexts in which they operate. The context of public relations practice enables researchers to theorize how publics interpret and support messages. This evaluates the effectives of reaching the "win-win" zone Grunig (1995) described (Motion and Weaver, 2005).

The practice of discourse analysis requires strategic analysis within a flexible, yet dynamic system. With that, there are various methods of processing and representing text using discourse analysis (van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). The use of frequencies in discourse analyses such as this study represents the occurrences of specific linguistic conditions. This first level of analysis, conducted by this researcher partially using the computer software *NVivo*, provided direction for further inferences and implications. In discourse analysis researcher inferences can bridge assumptions and provide missing links in data. With these inferences two types of implications can be presented: conventional and conversational. Conventional implications represent the literal meaning of words used whereas conversational implications are derived from relevant values and add quality (Brown and Yule, 1983). The researcher presents both literal and value-based implications in this case through the presentation of key word and synonym analysis results along with categorization of text.

Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA)

Implications in this study are presented in the form of best practices and continuous renewal recommendations for each HBCU featured in this project. This study specifically applies the Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) technique. AIDA is a newly developed form of Grounded Practical Theory (GPT) that focuses specifically on communication practices in institutions. In short, the AIDA method calls for analysis of transcripts in a context that leads to

theoretically-informed induction of communication practices (Irestig and Timpka, 2010). Karen Tracy (2007), the originator of AIDA, said it is a methodological expression of GPT. AIDA is "a meta-theoretical orientation that seeks to reconstruct communicative practices–their problems, discursive strategies, and situated ideals" (p. 424).

AIDA takes a normative and pragmatic approach to discourse analysis. This practice takes seriously the actual, though sometimes contradictory aims of communication practice. As a key concept, the AIDA method draws from the Aristotelian idea of phronesis, or good judgment, and practical wisdom (Tracy, 2004).

There are two basic steps to AIDA: recording and transcription; and theoretical analysis. AIDA scholars draw upon knowledge of the communicative scene developed through observations, study of written documents, and participant interviews. "In sum, AIDA is an ethnographically inflected type of discourse analysis that reconstructs discourse strategies and interaction problems in order to develop insights to aid participants in reflecting thoughtfully on communicative action in a social practice" (Tracy, 2007, p. 424).

AIDA is a distinctive process because it has a special focus on communication practices in institutions. This method has a particular analytical aim of reconstructing problems, discourse strategies and tactics, and practical ideals. The participant's perspective of the communication practices under study is determined by his or her place within the organization (Tracy, 2004).

In describing the actual method of conducting an AIDA study, Tracy (2004) recommends that the researcher have an extensive knowledge about the routine practices under study. Observation or experience in the practice allow the researcher to understand the focal and meta-discourses of the profession. The focal discourse describes how participants speak (talk or write) with each other. In this case focal discourse includes public relations history, lingo, and journalistic practices and traditions. Meta-discourse understanding involves how participants

speak about themselves as a group. The next step is selecting segments of the focal practice, post-crisis communication in this case for analysis. One way to conduct this task is to choose sections of interaction that seem to conflict with how an institution describes its practices or how participants characterize their intentions or actions. This step is where the researcher in this case initially coded for key words and synonyms that displayed renewal discourse and where text and other material data were classified into discourse of renewal-based codes. Codes were represented digitally by color and the researched continued color coding hard-copy data with a highlighter in order to organize categorizations. The subsequent step in the AIDA process was to analyze long segments of transcribed text to build interpretations of the communication problems experienced by each university. "In transcribing AIDA seeks to capture full words and those that are cut off, repetitions and restarts, and ums, uh huhs, and other vocal sounds" (Tracy, 2004, pp. 228-229). In agreement with the AIDA principles, the unedited original, 91 single-spaced pages of transcriptions of each in-depth interview were used in analysis and are included in (appendix E) of this study. Tracy (2004, p. 233) summarized the final step in the AIDA methodological approach:

> The final step, not necessarily present in any individual study, is to propose ideas about how participants might better reflect about a focal practice so that they act in a more effective and morally reasonable manner. This final normative step, requiring phronesis, takes account of and prioritizes among the multiple aims of the focal institutional practice. Without a doubt this judgment process is difficult; at the same time, making this kind of judgment is just what participants do all the time. Developing ideas to aid participants' judgment making, then, is the action part of AIDA.

Implications for action, or best practices, tend to be profession specific. Though no conclusions can be drawn across AIDA studies of different professions, the identification of problems in a given study is essential to any AIDA project. The second common implication is to not dismiss, but address what may be deemed as common practices. It may be that

practitioners need to be reminded of ideal best practices in order to work harder at implementing these practices. Or, AIDA analysis could also reveal that participants are more knowledgeable and have better executed best practices than he or she may recognize.

In summary, "reconstructing communicative practices using AIDA is a way to develop useful ideas that can aid communicators as they reflect about how to conduct themselves more wisely in the practices about which they care" (Tracy, 2004, p. 234). The researcher's use of AIDA in this study allows for the discovery and presentation of highly practical results that can be presented to each featured institution for use in enhancing organizational public relations and crisis communication practice. In addition to providing a unique window into HBCU culture and public relations activities, the research is also adding to the new and growing body of academic and professional literature highlighting Grounded Practical Theory and Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis. This study essentially identifies the successful actions taken and provides suggestions for improvement in the area of discourse of renewal for each HBCU. The researcher offers a best practices guide suitable for general use that reflects best practices outlined in previous literature, but presents a unique perspective in applying the practices in an environment of renewal.

CHAPTER 4
HAMPTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SHOOTING

"We just had to communicate with the entire world, because…
the minute they said school shooting it was viral…." – Yuri Rodgers Milligan

The above quote describes the highly newsworthy, viral nature of a school shooting in America today. This chapter presents interview and documentation results specific to the Hampton University shooting incident. Yuri Rodgers Milligan, director of university relations at Hampton University was interviewed for this case and 27 documents were analyzed. Results are presented in terms of discourse of renewal factors. The researcher also provides a description of the director of public relations' professional background as well as a description of the Hampton University public relations staff and primary office functions.

Introduction

Yuri Milligan has served as director of the Hampton University public relations office since 2004. She earned a bachelor's degree in print journalism from Hampton in 1997. A native of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, Milligan began her career as an advertising copywriter at the *Daily Progress* in Charlottesville, Virginia. She then worked as a reporter for the *Daily Press* in Newport News, Virginia. Milligan returned to Hampton University in 1999 as a public relations assistant and in 2001 she earned a master's degree in public administration with an emphasis in non-profit marketing from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to her appointment as director, Milligan also served in the Office of University Relations as a public relations specialist and as a senior public relations specialist.

Milligan supervises three public relations specialists, a graphic designer, and an administrative assistant in the Office of University Relations at Hampton University. This office runs on a beat system, much like a newsroom. Each public relations specialist works with a different set of schools and departments within the university. The regular activities of this office

include consistently pitching news stories and responding to reporter inquiries, writing press releases, and communicating with publics via social media. This office also produces a faculty, staff and local alumni newsletter titled *The Hampton Life* that is distributed via mail and at local supermarkets. The student newsletter, called *Student Connection*, is an online publication. Other regular publications include an annual research bulletin, a semi-annual alumni magazine, and university event-related publications and flyers.

In terms of daily media relations Milligan said, "I think that we work well with the media in this office. We return all calls within 24 hours, and usually in the same working day…and I think that the media respects that, and in turn we respect them. Of course, it's a relationship that can always be a little rocky from time to time, but I think that in general our encounters have been...truly beneficial."

Milligan considers public relations a management function at Hampton University. In terms of successfully planning, managing, and recommending communication activities to the administration she said, "some ideas and some implementations have been accepted, and we are still working on some others." Milligan has direct access to the university president, but she is not a full member of the dominant coalition in that she is typically contacted for public relations counsel only for specific crisis or near crisis situations.

Milligan went on to say that in addition to maintaining relationships with students and faculty, her office also works to advocate for other publics. In this vain, they communicate regularly with alumni, donors, parents, and media. Milligan also works to maintain positive "town and gown" relationships, uniting Hampton University with its surrounding community through partnerships and collaborations.

The most recent of these collaborations is the creation of the Hampton University Proton Therapy Institute (HUPTI), opening this year. This nearly 100,000 square foot facility located

offsite from the main campus is the only proton therapy center in the state of Virginia and among only five in the United States. Proton therapy is an innovative cancer treatment that directly targets tumors while sparing surrounding healthy tissue, causing fewer side effects and requiring less recovery time than traditional treatments.

"The university's ability to make this vision a reality is inspirational for the entire…community…It is very clear that this will be the largest, most equipped and the most beautiful proton therapy facility in the world," said Bernt Nordin in a statement on the HUPTI website. Nordin is president of IBA Particle Therapy, Incorporated, a business partner of the university and the HUPTI.

The Crisis

Milligan described the crisis situation and the initial actions taken by the university to rectify the situation. In the early morning hours, at approximately 1 o'clock on Sunday, April 26, 2009, a former Hampton University student opened fire on campus. The student entered Harkness Hall, a freshman male dormitory housing 220 students, firing multiple shots at the night manager of the dorm and a pizza deliveryman before shooting himself. The school was immediately put on lockdown while a police investigation was conducted.

Media coverage described further details of the crisis. *The Daily Press* is one of the major newspapers in the Hampton Roads, Virginia area. Macaulay and Shalash in an (April 30, 2009) in an article explained that the shooter was 18-year-old O'dane Greg Maye from Richmond, Virginia who was living in New York. The victims were 43-year-old pizza deliveryman Tom McCall and a 62-year-old dorm night manager who did not want to be identified. No one was fatally injured in the shooting.

Szkotak (April 26, 2009) described more detail in *The Huffington Post*. Hampton University is a closed campus 24-hours a day where all vehicles entering the campus must pass

through a security gate by either providing faculty, staff, or resident student credentials or by providing proper identification and stating the purpose for the visit. Maye parked his vehicle outside the campus gates to avoid the security checkpoint. He then followed the pizza delivery driver into the dorm. A freshman resident of the dorm, 18-year-old Jelani Holland, said he and other students were playing video games and music when they heard the fire alarm to evacuate in the early morning hours the day of the shooting. Holland saw the deliveryman after the driver had been shot in the neck and stomach. Once the dorm was evacuated, first responders began to address the wounded individuals and the shooter was apprehended.

According to *Maye v. Record No. 2590-09-1 Commonwealth of Virginia* (2011), Maye was convicted of breaking and entering, shooting inside an occupied dwelling, two counts of malicious wounding, and two counts of firearm in the commission of a felony. He was sentenced to a total of 68 years imprisonment, with 54 years suspended. He was also ordered to pay financial damages.

An (April 27, 2009) *Virginian-Pilot* article described one Hampton University student's feelings about the event. The *Virginian-Pilot* is the other daily newspaper in Hampton Roads. Kristen Douthit, a sophomore from New York at the time of the shooting, questioned the security system that allowed Maye to enter the dorm. She noted how if he had not shot himself, the situation could have been much worse. "If you went on a spree, a lot of people could have been hurt," said Douthit. "I know that parents are worried and students are really upset." After the immediate incident, Hampton faculty and staff rallied behind the president's mission to offer any possible assistance to the victims, the victims' families, and concerned students.

Crisis Response

The university engaged in several crisis response strategies and tactics to initially contain the situation. Milligan explains that the main messages the university wanted to convey

immediately after the shooting were that no one was fatally injured, that the area was safe and secure because the shooter had been apprehended, and that counselors were available. The very nature of a school shooting caused the news of the event to go viral. Milligan and other university communicators and administrators had to communicate with not only students, but also concerned parents who began calling overnight and of course media.

Milligan received positive feedback from her peers regarding her management of crisis communication in this situation. This demonstrates the value of professional alliances and support. Many called to commend the messaging and effective release of statements after the crisis. Others called to offer condolences and extend assistance. "I thought that kind of camaraderie between…PR directors at universities was helpful."

A variety of media were used to inform publics. Dorm directors were notified by word-of-mouth and were instructed to inform their respective dormitories. Emails were sent to all Hampton University addresses and voicemails were left on all campus phones. Letters were also placed under all dormitory and office doors. One press release stating the basic facts about the incident was distributed the day of the shooting. Subsequent releases providing more detail were sent in the days following the shooting. These releases are discussed below according the discourse of renewal factors demonstrated in each. Members of the university crisis team held a press conference at 4 p.m. on the day of the shooting. This team includes Milligan, President Harvey, the Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Barbara Inman, and University Police Chief Leroy Crosby. Dr. Harvey was the primary spokesperson at the press conference, which was packed to capacity with local and regional reporters and several concerned students. One *Associated Press* (AP) reporter was in attendance. Two subsequent meetings with students were held within two days of the shooting by crisis team members to address student concerns directly.

Milligan said that the university's greatest strength in the area of immediate crisis communication was the releasing of statements. The press conference "went on without a hitch," she said. In addition to relying on Milligan's opinion, Hampton hired a private consultant to evaluate the crisis communication responses. Evaluative research and Milligan's personal contacts determined that the written and oral messages were received well overall and were effective. Woodrow (April 28, 2009) said on WAVY, the local NBC affiliate in the Hampton area that some students were not satisfied that the campus was indeed safe and prepared to handle a similar crisis in the future. Leon Hendrix, a senior at the time of the shooting, attended one of the student meetings held by the university police chief and the vice president of student affairs. Hendrix wasn't satisfied with an answer to his question regarding what students should do if a similar situation occurred. He was told to ask his resident advisor. Hendrix deemed this "absolutely ridiculous because if you get on an airplane they're not going to tell you if they plane goes down find me and I'll tell you how to swim." A freshman student Timothy Wiggins said in this same article that he hoped to see "big changes" in terms of campus security.

The speed, or lack thereof, of university crisis communication was an area cited for improvement. Milligan admitted that media arrived at the university before she did. The absence of a spokesperson allowed media to turn to students and other non-designated sources for initial comments on the shooting. Research did show that the preferred time for the press conference would have been earlier on the day of the shooting. The afternoon conference at 4 p.m. was deemed to be too late. The area most cited for improvement, however, was the distribution of emergency text messages.

Sturdevant (April 28, 2009) reported in a *Daily Press* article that text messages were sent at about 3 o'clock the morning of the shooting to approximately 1,600 students who voluntarily signed up for the emergency text service. The message read, "there was a shooting at Harkness

Hall. The suspect has been apprehended and the campus is safe." Numerous complaints were made that texts were sent out two hours after the shooting and some felt this decision could have endangered others who were not immediately informed of the situation. The Hampton chief of police made the decision about the timing of the text messages. Sturdevant's (2009) article went on to say that Hampton President Dr. Harvey defended Crosby's decision about the text messages. The decision was made based on three factors: "making sure the area was safe, making sure the situation was under control, and guaranteeing the message was accurate." The police chief said the message would have been distributed immediately if the situation wasn't contained, if the gunman had been on the loose.

Discourse of Renewal Efforts

The previous sections provided an explanation of the crisis communications practices applied during this crisis at Hampton University as well as a description of the ongoing public relations function at the university. This section will directly address the research questions of this study. Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) was used to determine how Hampton University implemented discourse of renewal efforts. Keyword analysis, along with the analysis of themes and phrases featured in documentation evidence helped the researcher to categorize these efforts. The researcher also used personal knowledge of HBCU public relations to place discourse in the proper contexts. Below is a summary of the *NVivo* analysis of Milligan's responses in terms of the discourse of renewal. Additionally, a breakdown of university actions and responses according to the discourse of renewal factors is described.

NVivo Analysis

A *NVivo* keyword and synonym Boolean search of Milligan's interview transcript revealed that she demonstrated Prospective Focus five times during the interview. *NVivo* calculates the value of each coded reference or mention and these five references represent eight

percent of her total response. Key words used to code for prospective focus were renewal, rebuilding, recovery, and future. The word opportunity was the only key word searched for under the opportunity code. Provisional responses key words were vision, president; Harvey (the last name of the president); and goals. Values, history, tradition, safety, standards, and reputation served as key words for the core values code. Three Opportunities references were made, valued at 12 percent of the transcript. Milligan provided 11, or 38 percent Provisional Responses. The majority, 59 percent of Milligan's interview consisted of responses addressing Core Values. These results reflect the sentiments emphasizing Hampton core values and tradition in the statements categorized below.

Prospective Focus

R_1: How did each university utilize prospective post-crisis discourse?

In a *Daily Press* (May 4, 2009) YouTube video of the press conference, Harvey vowed to be "very open" and "transparent" with the public. Harvey's letter to students was featured in the (April, 2009) issue of *The Student Connection* student newsletter. He addressed the severity of the situation and demonstrated prospective focus in the following statement:

> Please be assured that Hampton University continues to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our campus. There is no greater priority for us than the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. We are working hand-in-hand with law enforcement authorities to confirm exactly what happened and why. All of the first responders including, Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University Police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel, handled the shooting on campus in a swift, professional, and effective manner. They are real heroes. I commend them for immediately handling what quite possibly could have been an even more tragic situation. (See complete letter in appendix D)

Watson Batts (April 28, 2009) opened her *Virginian-Pilot* article saying that "Hampton University was back to normal Monday," the day after the shooting. This demonstrates a quick

return to a peaceful environment and a prospective outlook, as judged by someone outside the university. In the same article Patrick Whitaker, a 19-year-old freshman student, agreed with the return to normalcy and said that Monday was "quiet…but it's always quiet."

Classes ended Tuesday after the shooting, as the incident occurred at the end of the spring semester. Milligan said in Wikan (April 29, 2009) that as of that Tuesday, students were preparing for finals as usual. She also said Harkness Hall remained open and on-going counseling was available. In a letter specifically addressing parents, also released via a press release on April 29, 2009 (appendix D) Harvey informed them of the multiple meetings and counseling sessions with students. He told parents he wanted them to be the "beneficiary of the latest information available."

An April 28, 2009 Hampton University press release (appendix D) stated that Harvey encouraged faculty and staff to make sure all campus door locks and card entry systems were working properly in their respective buildings. Personnel were instructed to "swiftly report any malfunctions," implying the university was prepared to immediately enhance campus security. In the Wilson (2009) article Harvey said all aspects of campus security were reviewed, "including the ability of someone to walk onto campus unrestricted."

The *Hampton Roads Voice* (2009) explained that Harvey stood by Crosby's decision regarding the delay in sending the emergency text messages. "He was the boots on the ground. He was there and it was his decision," said Harvey. Harvey did, however, accept blame for the "tardiness." Although focusing on blame in crisis communication is not exemplary of renewal discourse, Harvey addressed blame in this case in an effort to reinforce the decision-making of his staff. He exhibited acknowledgement of the concerns regarding the timing of the text messages in an effort to demonstrate prospective focus, or move forward.

Sturdevant (2009) cited Milligan, saying that the university held an emergency text

message sign-up session in the student center the day after the shooting. This was done in hopes of getting more students enrolled in the voluntary system. In the same article Harvey mentioned that making the emergency text service mandatory for students was also under consideration at the time. The mandatory text service was ultimately not implemented due to individual cellular phone plan costs and other logistical problems, but the consideration of including all students demonstrated prospective focus.

Milligan said that Hampton did not have a social media program in place at the time of the shooting. Now that the university is active on Facebook, Twitter, and various alumni-centered social media sites, Milligan said that Hampton is now able to much more quickly distribute crisis and other information. The use of social media in cooperation with the emergency text messages will help Hampton in a future crisis to reach more students and other publics in a more immediate manner.

Opportunities

R_2: What opportunities arose as a result of each university crisis and how did each institution seize these opportunities?

The crisis in 2009 was the first of this type of violent incident in the 31 years Harvey had been president of Hampton. Harvey stressed during the press conference that he still believed Hampton was "one of the safest campuses anywhere." The incident created a unique opportunity to reevaluate the university's safety, security, and crisis communication measures (Wilson, 2009) (Watson Batts, 2009). Inman, Hampton vice president of student affairs, also took the opportunity to remind students that the Student Counseling Center was always available to students and that in the wake of the crisis students were "especially encouraged to take advantage of the service" (*Student Connection,* April, 2009).

Milligan also viewed the fact that the Virginia Tech tragedy occurred before the Hampton

incident as an opportunity. The Hampton University Relations staff heard from Virginia Tech public relations staff members at a statewide conference of college communicators. Milligan said she and her team learned from the strategies and tactics used by the Virginia Tech team and that some of the efforts were implemented in a way that fit for Hampton. Milligan's team tried to implement the text messaging service and to be proactive with media communication. Although these efforts were not perfectly applied in the Hampton situation, the knowledge gained from a crisis the magnitude of the one at Virginia Tech was valuable.

The day after the shooting, university residence life staff seized the opportunity to search all of the rooms in Harkness Hall. Alcohol, illegal drugs, and four toy BB guns were found. No firearms were found during the "health, safety, and welfare inspection," said Milligan. Students who owned the illegal items found were issued a written citation (Macaulay and Shalash, 2009).

Hampton University turned the negative nature of this crisis into several positive acts of stewardship. First, the university set up a support fund for the two injured victims. The HU Victims Support Fund accepted online and mail-in donations to help benefit the families of the victims. The university issued a press release (appendix D) notifying publics about how to contribute to the support fund. The *Student Connection* (April, 2009) said that member of the Student Leadership Program also sent care packages to the victims.

Milligan considered the "major success story" or opportunity to be the partnership developed between the university and the pizza deliveryman, Tom McCall. McCall had taken up a job delivering pizza to make ends meet. He was a professional chemist who had been laid off earlier in 2009. McCall was hired and now works for the university in the chemistry department. "It's a testament that…he felt the university was safe, that he came back and worked here," said Milligan. McCall's wife also now attends the university as a student.

Provisional Responses

R_3: How did each HBCU use provisional discourse in order to rebuild or restore order post-crisis?

"This was something that could happen anywhere. This is a…freak thing that happened, but this is a good university, a good and safe place for students to come and live," said Milligan, explaining that Hampton was and continues to be a secure campus. Milligan echoed the comments of Dr. Harvey, who clearly exhibited his leadership of the crisis situation and renewal. Harvey often served as spokesperson in crisis communications.

Harvey spoke personally with the injured dorm manager, showing compassion. Harvey mentioned in a *Daily Press* article (Sturdevant, April 28, 2009) that the man was in good spirits. "The Lord has blessed me," said Harvey reiterating the comments of the injured man. This demonstrated not only Harvey's outreach, but also the level of peace held by the victimized employee after the tragic situation.

In Wilson (April 27, 2009), Harvey said, "we are fortunate and blessed that no student was involved. The Hampton University community is praying for those injured in this tragic incident." Harvey encouraged everyone to join in the effort of keeping students safe. He instructed professors to "preach safety" (*Hampton Roads Voice*, 2009). In another article Harvey stated that students and the entire campus community had to be "vigilant" in making safety a priority (Watson Batts, 2009). The following photo (Figure 4), featured in a Daily Press gallery related to the shooting incident, provides a visual example of Harvey's rapport with students in the wake of the event.

Core Values

R_4: How did institutional or overall HBCU values drive the renewal process?

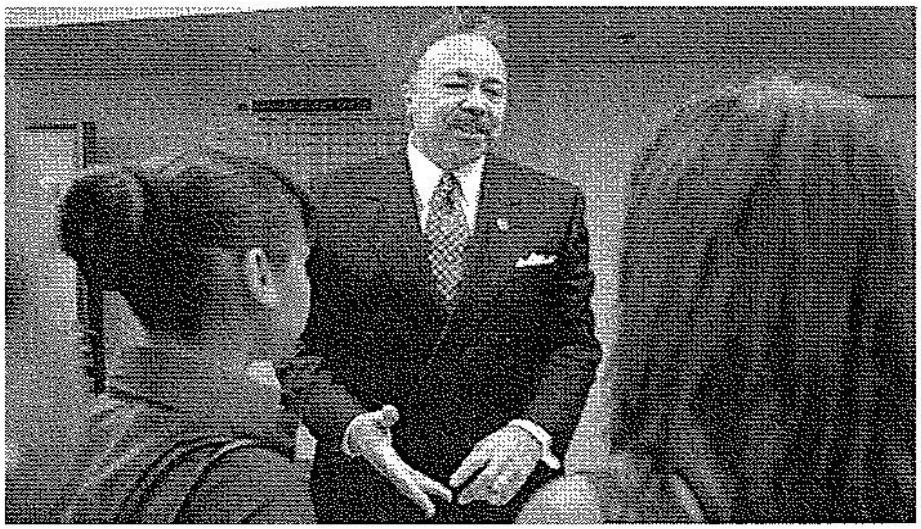
In the spirit of the HBCU village-like family atmosphere, students held a support rally for

the residents of Harkness Hall in the days following the shooting. This event was mentioned in a (April 28, 2009) press release (appendix D) among the discussion of the various counseling and informational meetings offered to students. Similarly, Parsons (April 27, 2009) discussed in the *Daily Press* the fact that Harvey lives on campus allowed him to quickly come to the scene of the crime and to the aid of students. In the *Hampton Roads Voice* (2009) Harvey said though safety was a priority, he was not willing to erect a wall around the campus to keep out unauthorized pedestrian traffic. He emphasized that evaluation of the current security measures and distributing proper security information to all parties concerned was a better method for controlling campus safety, while maintaining the campus culture and aesthetics.

Triple shooting at Hampton University

Image 1 of 5

1 2 3 4 5



Rate this photo:

Hampton University President Dr. William R. Harvey talks with students after the press conference Sunday afternoon. Dr. Harvey spoke to students and media about the triple shootings on campus hours earlier.
(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

FIGURE 4
HAMPTON PRESIDENT CONSOLES STUDENTS

The *Hampton University Mission Statement* expresses university core values at several points throughout the text. The principle behind the Hampton motto of "Education for Life" is expressed in the mission statement. Much of the messaging strategies and tactics used to communicate the details of this event as well as the actions and comments made by the university president reflect how these core values were driving principles of the renewal process.

The mission statement begins with a statement that addresses the molding of students into productive citizens:

> Hampton University is a comprehensive institution of higher education, dedicated to the promotion of learning, building of character, and preparation of promising students for positions of leadership and service….In carrying out its mission, the University requires that everything that it does be of the highest quality.

The university promotes a student-centered atmosphere. The remainder of the statement continues to emphasize the importance of the total educational and campus experience in character and citizen building. The following are excerpts demonstrating these values (emphasis added by researcher):

> Placing its students at the center of its planning, the University provides a holistic educational environment. Learning is facilitated by a range of educational-offerings, a rigorous curriculum, excellent teaching, professional experiences, multiple leadership opportunities, and an emphasis on the development of character, which ***values integrity, respect, decency, dignity, and responsibility*.**

> In achieving its mission, Hampton University offers exemplary programs and opportunities, which enable students, faculty and staff to grow, develop and contribute to our society in a productive, useful manner.

More than other universities, Hampton is known for implementing distinctive character-building policies. This in combination with the official mission statement shows how, regardless of the reason Maye stopped attending the university after one semester, that he did not exemplify the expected character of a Hamptonian. Some deem these policies strict or outdated, but they

are tested and proven to work for the Hampton University community. Policies such as a dress code and seven day a week curfew times for freshmen students further illustrate the clearly outlined core values at Hampton.

Summary

These results demonstrate an overall successful effort of post-crisis renewal at Hampton University. It is evident that tactical mistakes were made during the immediate crisis communication phase, but it appears the university has learned from these mistakes and is now more prepared to handle a similar crisis in the future should one occur. As media coverage and evaluation results show, the primary flaw in Hampton University's crisis communication efforts in this case was the lack of prompt responses. Hampton learned from this delayed communication and took measures to respond more expediently should another campus crisis occur. The university also took advantage of the opportunity to reevaluate and improve campus security, and student morale regarding safety.

Interview and document data reveal that Milligan works in a public relations manager role, primarily as an expert prescriber. She has a position in the dominant coalition, but it appears to be a secondary role. Evidence shows that the university president, police chief, and vice president of student affairs played significant or even dominant roles in this crisis communication situation. Milligan has negotiated, however, for quicker and more impactful notification in such events. Additionally, Milligan and her staff continue to advocate for sometimes forgotten off-campus publics such as parents and community members.

Hampton has demonstrated exceptional stewardship in pursuing ongoing crisis renewal. The implementation of the support fund was of good measure, along with the presentation of a pep rally and care packages. These activities are not uncommon in crisis communication practice. However, Hampton demonstrated extra initiative. Employing one of the shooting

victims and accepting his wife as a degree-seeking student shows not only that the university cares about keeping the campus safe, but also that there is a level of concern for all who were involved.

CHAPTER 5
TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTIAL FINANCIAL SCANDAL

"She just would not listen.
She wanted to spend money like she wanted to spend it." – Eva K. Pickens

The above quote describes Eva K. Pickens' feelings about the misappropriation of funds by for Texas Southern University president. This chapter presents interview and documentation results specific to the Texas Southern University (TSU) financial scandal. Pickens, director of communication and community relations and Wendy Adair, vice president for university advancement were interviewed and 17 documents were analyzed. Results are presented in terms of discourse of renewal factors. The researcher also provides a description of the director of communications' professional background as well as a description of the Texas Southern University public relations staff and primary office functions.

Introduction

Eva K. Pickens, director of communication and community relations, at Texas Southern University is a native of Opelousas, Louisiana and a 1977 graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Upon earning her bachelor's degree she became the first black reporter in Opelousas for the *Opelousas Daily World*, a *New York Times* affiliate. Pickens relocated to Houston, Texas and began her first tenure in the TSU communications office in 1983 at the age of 24.

"They used to call me 'the press release lady,'" said Pickens, describing the simplistic public relations function at the university when she first arrived. Coming from a small town, Pickens was shocked to recognize the vast nature of the Houston media market. When Pickens first arrived at TSU, she learned that eight weekly newspapers were serving the immediate community surrounding the university. There were two major papers at the time, the *Houston Post*, and *The Houston Chronicle*. *The Houston Post* has since been closed. There were also five

major television stations. “So immediately I knew that we had to build an image for Texas Southern,” said Pickens.

Pickens stayed with TSU until she was dismissed in 2005 by Dr. Priscilla Slade, former TSU president responsible for the recent financial scandal. Pickens then worked in public relations for a non-profit in Houston until she was asked by the current president and vice president for institutional advancement to return in 2008 to help communicate TSU’s recovery from the financial crisis. In addition to Pickens the TSU communications office consists of a secretary, a junior writer and art director, and a senior writer and editor. Pickens reports to the vice president of institutional advancement, but says she has direct access to the president. Pickens is a member of the TSU dominant coalition in that she directly advises the president on communication planning, strategies, and tactics and her suggestions are implemented regularly.

Wendy Adair is vice president for university advancement at TSU. She followed President John Rudley to TSU in 2007 after spending 30 years at the University of Houston (UofH). Adair started at UofH as assistant director of media relations and worked her way up to associate vice president for university relations. She was ultimately responsible for all marketing and public relations at UofH.

At first, Adair was not enthusiastic about working for Texas Southern because she knew the university was in trouble. “I knew about all of the trauma and turmoil and horror stories about it (TSU),” said Adair. Adair was aware the university was experiencing severe financial and accreditation problems. Her initial plan was just to provide public relations consulting advice to Rudley. However, she gave TSU a second thought and was persuaded to take the challenge and join Rudley’s team. She said one of the main reasons she came to TSU was Rudley’s goal of focusing on faculty and student accomplishments. Previously, the vast majority of TSU news

coverage focused on the school's administration. She also signed on because she knew of the crisis at TSU and she felt "crisis communication is a big deal," she said.

At TSU Adair is responsible for overseeing Pickens' unit of communications and community relations. Adair also supervises the university marketing and student recruitment marketing functions. University advancement handles branding, special events, alumni relations, and fundraising. Adair says there are 23 people who work under the university advancement umbrella, fewer people than she had doing just public relations at UofH. TSU also has a part-time employee who manages social media. Adair is impressed with the current effectiveness of university communications at TSU. She said "Eva (Pickens) and her team are still getting more hits in the paper" than the 10 times larger UofH staff.

Pickens says her office responds quickly to media inquiries and that she is a trusted face. She says she is always transparent, even if the university is at fault. She also said the president has no problem going on camera and she is responsible for briefing him when necessary.

Pickens handles national media issues and is the official spokesperson for TSU. The senior writer and editor handles individual college and school communication initiatives and events and is also responsible for media relations with non-major outlets, though Pickens must approve anything that is released. "Nothing goes out unless I see it because I know the sensitivity and I know the politics," she said. The junior writer and art director is responsible for creating fliers, invitations and other communications collateral materials. The departmental secretary helps to manage Pickens' schedule and also serves as what Pickens calls "*Tiger Talk* coordinator." This means the secretary is also responsible for handling general inquiries from parents and alumni.

On a regular basis, Pickens' office writes editorials for local papers, conducts community relations events, and manages a speaker's bureau. Pickens summarized the three main

responsibilities of her office. The office works to heighten the awareness of the university through branding. Pickens' office assists with recruiting and also helps to increase fundraising from grants, alumni, and corporate entities. "We can't just do press releases," said Pickens.

The TSU Office of Communications also provides public relations content such as major university accomplishments and updates for a local cable channel as well as a weekly 30-minute informational spot for the campus radio station. The office also designs and distributes a weekly online publication titled *eNews*. Additionally, since Pickens' return to the university, the communications office has gained centralized control over TSU communications. "We're responsible for all campus communication," said Pickens. "So everything has to come through us for approval. Events, statements, everything comes through us," she said. The previous TSU communications system was highly decentralized and the communications office often disseminated information for off-campus entities that wanted to reach an African American audience.

In order to evaluate effectiveness, the office of communications now produces a quarterly report that explains local, national, and international media coverage. Regular measurement and evaluation of public relations activities is important for TSU, "because a lot of times businesses, and especially Historically Black Colleges, see our jobs as fluff," said Pickens. Her office uses a detailed matrix to measure the amount and tone of media coverage. The university subscribes to a service called Millwater, which provides data describing the school's overall media reach. Below is an example of a TSU communications matrix from the first quarter of 2010 (Figure 5).

The Crisis

Texas Southern University (TSU), actually had no one in charge of public relations in the midst of the presidential financial scandal and other challenges to the university. As noted above, Eva K. Pickens, TSU director of communications worked in this role before and after the crisis,

but was “forced” out by Dr. Priscilla Slade, former TSU president who was found guilty of mismanaging university funds. Not only was there no crisis communication plan in place before the financial scandal story broke, but TSU had no public relations staff from 2006-2008 to enact a plan had a plan existed. This left the university completely vulnerable to intense media scrutiny and community criticism and set the school up to have to engage in massive renewal and image building activities.

Asquith (December 14, 2006) in an eight-page expose’ in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* explained the events that led to the unveiling of the financial scandal. On December 4, 2004, a TSU student named Ashley Sloan was shot and killed after leaving a party near the campus. The murder raised concerns about campus security at the once “violence-plagued” school. Students and student government members Justin Jordan, Oliver Brown, and William Hudson organized a student safety committee. Sloan’s killer, who was not a student, had been captured, but these students were still concerned about safety at TSU. Jordan, Brown, and Hudson, who later became known as the “TSU 3,” began to patrol the campus, identifying emergency call boxes in need of repair and areas where additional lighting was needed. “It was crazy and things were in bad shape,” said Hudson. “We had a dead student on campus, there were areas of campus with no or very poor lighting and we had emergency phones that were inoperable,” he said (Vogel, November 28, 2007).

The crisis dealt with in this study began one night when the TSU 3 discovered an abandoned dump truck that contained discarded university payroll files. When the TSU 3 saw the paper in the dump truck, they were initially excited because among other problems there was a shortage of computer paper on campus at the time. Brown initially went into the unlocked truck to collect the paper for recycling.

Communications Outcome Matrix

** Media exposure generated by TSU's Office of Communications" January – March 2010)*

Media Type	Types of Coverage	Number of Spots	Local/State/National
Radio	Talks Show/News	56	Local/State/National
Television	Talk Shows/News/Calendars	18	Local
Television	News Coverage	30	State/National/International
Magazine	Articles	49	Local/National
Newspaper	Articles/Feature Stories/Media Hits	4,312	Local/National
Newspaper	Articles/Media Hits	2,596	International
Total			
Media Releases/Pitches/Articles/ Sound bites and story mentions U.S. and Global		**7,061**	**Total viewership 898,651,662**

All data for this report is courtesy of Meltwater News Service.

I. Media Highlight: (Major News Stories for January - March 2010)

	Number of Hits/Stories	Tone (+/-)
1. TSU NASA CBER URC /NASA Space Shuttle Launch STS-129	6	100% (+)
2. TSU Distinguished Alumni Banquet	4	100% (+)
3. Procedural Error Land TSU back on probation	26	100% (-)
4. Homecoming 2009 "We are Legend"	5	100% (+)
5. TSU and diversity	1	100% (+)
6. TSU Remains Accredited (story diffused)	4	100% (+)
7. TSU to host forum on Obama's 1st year	44	100% (+)
8. Maurice Hope-Thompson	4	100% (+)
9. Tradition changing in black colleges – TSU diversity	4	100% (+)
10. Police officer sexual harassment accusations (story diffused)	3	100% (-)

II. TSU Representation in the National Media Markets: (Top 3 Areas of information distribution for Texas Southern University – Hits/Stories)

1. Texas – 596
2. California – 307
3. Louisiana – 191

II. TSU Representation in the Statewide Media Markets: (Top 3 Areas of information distribution for Texas Southern University – Hits/Stories)

1. Houston - 329
2. Dallas - 185
3. San Antonio – 8

FIGURE 5
TSU COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOME MATRIX

However, once skimming the papers they knew they were on to something, the payroll records. "As soon as we pulled it out, we knew we had found something big," said Brown. The students crossed referenced these files with other published payroll documents and found significant discrepancies such as people on the payroll who were no longer employed by the university. When the TSU 3 approached administrators, they were told to blame the State of Texas for inadequate funding and to keep quiet. This started the three-year financial investigation at TSU (Vogel, November 28, 2007).

By January of 2005, the TSU 3 had issued an open letter to Texas Governor Rick Perry expressing concern about corruption at Texas Southern (Asquith, December 14, 2006). The three students also circulated a petition calling for Slade's resignation. At this point, Slade agreed to meet with the three students and offered them bribes such as study abroad or campus employment opportunities to stop the petition. Several meetings took place and the students decided to start secretly recording the conversations, which is legal in Texas. The students' findings were compiled into to a 20-page report that was submitted to the TSU Board of Regents. The board initially responded with a vote of confidence for Slade in August 2005 (Asquith, December 14, 2006).

The students kept investigating and pushing for change. They were eventually arrested by campus police officers and faced charges of "fraudulent use of identifying information" (Asquith, December 14, 2006). A district court judge immediately dropped these charges. This however, was not the end of the repercussions experienced by the TSU 3. They were forced to face the campus Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committee on multiple charges including "inflicting mental harm," insubordination, and "disturbing a meeting." They were all forced out of their student government roles and Hudson was suspended for a year and fired from his

campus job. Asquith (December 14, 2006) features a quote from Patrick Gilpin, lawyer for the TSU 3 that explained how the three were treated:

> They've had their education, their life, their career all slowed down. They've been ridiculed in front of students. They were very proud of their role in student government. These are very young men; they're not veterans like me. They're idealistic kids. They had discovered a lot of information and when they took it to the proper authorities, they were expelled and harassed.

Hudson's father was employed as an academic advisor at TSU at the time. He was ordered to write an apology letter for his son's behavior in order to keep his job. Glenn Hudson decided to resign and stick by his son. Vogel, in an (November 28, 2007) article in the *Houston Press*, cited William Hudson's feelings about how the three were treated:

> I come from a multicultural background and I had a culture shock of what it meant to be black when I came to TSU. We were called traitors to our race and people said we were just out trying to make a name for ourselves instead of seeing that we were just trying to do the right thing. We had classmates that we thought were our friends acting like they didn't even know us, and it really hurt. We would go out somewhere and other blacks looked at us like were the scum of the earth.…We were just trying to set the record straight for taxpayers across the state and for parents who were paying to send their children to college. We were just trying to say, 'look, there's chaos and tyranny at TSU. And crime has no color.'

The TSU 3 filed a federal suit against the university for wrongfully ousting them from the school and for violating the students' freedom of speech. Hudson was suspended, Brown was placed on probation, and Jordan's punishment was reversed upon appeal. The jury decided that free speech was violated when the students were disciplined for their public protest. Hudson was awarded $75,000, Brown received $65,000, and Jordan was compensated $50,000. Brown commented in the *Houston Chronicle* that he was glad someone, the jury, finally stood up for the three (George, August 1, 2008).

The attention the university received from the TSU 3's allegations and other cited problems caused the district attorney to quietly launch an investigation. In addition to the payroll

issues brought to the light by the three students, the university police chief was fired in 2004 for reporting missing funds. He went on to win a $314,000 whistleblower lawsuit. The university had to repay the state for missing funds from a $2.7 million tobacco settlement and another senior administrator was indicted for stealing more than $20,000 from an internship program (Asquith, December 14, 2006). The district attorney questioned all TSU board members and subpoenaed executive meeting minutes. The investigation led to the indictment of Slade and three administrators on charges of "misapplication of fiduciary responsibility" (Asquith, December 14, 2006).

"Slade was charged with misappropriation of funds because it appeared that she utilized monies to handle some personal situations…not approved by the board," said Pickens, who explained that the president was allowed to spend up to $100,000 without board approval. However, "there were instances where she was purchasing things for her home [such as] a lawn maintenance contract for $186,000." Such expenditures clearly required board authorization. Pickens also said that Slade was allotted a $50,000 per year expense account.

Slade was fired in June 2006. She avoided prison with a "no contest" plea and was sentenced of 10 years probation and 400 hours of community service. Slade also agreed to repay $127,672.18 to the university after initially being accused of misspending $500,000 of the "financially strapped" university's money on personal expenses, a first-degree felony. Governor Perry also replaced the entire TSU governing board because of the problems exposed under their watch. (Rogers, March 26, 2008).

In addition to firing the board, Perry temporarily froze $13 million in TSU funding. Lozano (July 14, 2008) reported in *USA TODAY* an example of how students felt about Slade's actions. "I'm pretty upset at what she did, I'm extremely upset," said TSU junior Nancy

Oluwatopi. She also said the suspension of funds meant she was unable to get the financial aid she was counting on.

Rodgers, in his (March 26, 2008) *Houston Chronicle* article, provided a timeline of the major events leading to Slade's downfall. All of these events occurred when TSU had no public relations staff:

> **2006**
>
> • **Jan. 26:** TSU regents meet privately to discuss questions about President Priscilla Slade's spending of school money on her new home near Memorial Park.
>
> • **Jan. 30:** Slade writes a personal check to TSU for more than $138,000 to reimburse the school for landscaping at her new home. Regents say they still have questions about $87,000 that Slade spent furnishing the residence.
>
> • **Feb. 3:** Regents strip Slade of her spending authority and announce they've hired the Bracewell & Giuliani law firm to investigate her spending.
>
> • **March 16:** Regents place Slade on paid leave.
>
> • **March 22:** Regents place Provost Bobby Wilson in charge of running the school.
>
> • **April 6:** An internal TSU audit questions nearly $650,000 in Slade's spending over a seven-year period. Some of those purchases include Christmas gifts for regents, furniture and personal maid services.
>
> • **June 7:** TSU regents fire Slade.
>
> • **Aug. 1:** A Harris County grand jury indicts Slade on two counts of misapplication of fiduciary property. She is later freed on $100,000 bond.
>
> • **Nov. 27:** TSU regents hire retired NASA manager and Air Force Brig. Gen. James Timothy Boddie Jr. as interim president.
>
> **2007**
>
> • **Aug. 21:** Jury selection begins in the Slade trial.
>
> • **Aug. 24:** Opening arguments begin.
>
> • **Oct. 8:** Jury begins deliberations.
>
> • **Oct. 12:** With jury deadlocked, judge declares mistrial.

2008

• **Feb. 8:** TSU regents hire John Rudley, the University of Houston's vice president for administration and finance, as the school's new president.

• **March 26, 2008:** Slade and prosecutors reach a plea agreement that allows her to avoid prison time by repaying TSU $127,672.18.

Crisis Response

The Texas Southern University Board of Regents confirmed Rudley as Slade's successor in January 2008 in a nine to zero vote. Texas law requires a 21-day waiting period before an appointment is considered final. Rudley officially took helm of the university in February 2008 (Biemiller, January 12, 2008).

Rudley immediately began trying to repair the financial and image damage inflicted upon TSU. New financial reports had to be issued to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). TSU was on a SACS accreditation probation at the time. The school was also in danger of losing NCAA scholarships and eligibility. The NCAA had issued 32 sanctions against TSU and in addition to these threats, enrollment dropped 30% according to Pickens.

The TSU administration, as a result their efforts to recover, continuously provided updated financial information to the appropriate governing bodies and managed to have the SACS probation lifted. However, this was short-lived. The State of Texas threatened to take over or even shut down the university. Rudley and his team failed to submit a state financial report to SACS, leading to a continued probation of six months. "That was a miss-step that kind of shook us all up," said Pickens.

Finally, after the additional six-month probation was lifted, TSU began running again on stable financial footing. At this point Rudley was prepared to begin addressing the other problems at TSU. Once a new stability was achieved, Pickens helped Rudley and the TSU administration to discuss the recent developments and plans for renewal with the community.

These renewal efforts are outlined below. Rudley's renewal plan, in addition to financial recovery goals, included a large community relations and stewardship component. The primary focus was to make the university transparent in all areas. Adair said it was important for the university to regain trust.

Pickens and her team wrote and distributed several press releases to help announce Rudley's plans. They also submitted editorial articles to local newspapers, held town hall meetings and focus groups, and created advisory committees. Pickens helped Rudley to recognize that the university needed community buy-in for the new initiatives. "They felt like they helped us make a decision to move TSU forward," said Pickens.

Discourse of Renewal Efforts

TSU had multiple issues to overcome, all tied into total renewal for the university. The school has adopted a theme of "TSU Now" that draws focus away from the university's troubled past to the recovery and renewal initiatives in place to help ensure the continued survival and success of the institution. The previous sections provided an explanation of the primary public relations function at Texas Southern University as well as a description of the crisis and the subsequent university response. This section will directly address the research questions of this study. Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) was used to determine how Texas Southern University implemented discourse of renewal efforts. Keyword analysis, along with the analysis of themes and phrases featured in documentation evidence helped the researcher to categorize these efforts. The researcher also used personal knowledge of HBCU public relations to place discourse in the proper contexts. Below is a summary the *NVivo* analysis of Pickens' and Adair's responses in terms of the discourse of renewal. Additionally, a breakdown of university actions and responses according to the discourse of renewal factors is described.

NVivo Analysis

The researcher conducted an NVivo keyword and synonym Boolean search of Pickens' and Adair's interview transcripts. Key words used to code for prospective focus were renewal, rebuilding, recovery, and future. The word opportunity was the only key word searched for under the opportunity code. Provisional responses key words were vision, president; Rudley (the last name of the president); and goals. Values, history, tradition, safety, standards, and reputation served as key words for the core values code. Pickens expressed Prospective Focus six times during the interview. *NVivo* calculates the value of each coded reference or mention and these six references represent three percent of her total response. Adair demonstrated Prospective Focus three times representing eight percent of her response. Pickens made 16 Opportunities references during her interview, valued at 15 percent. Adair did not reference an Opportunities. Pickens provided 63, or 52 percent Provisional Responses. Adair mentioned 22 Provisional Responses, representing 93 percent of her interview. The majority of Pickens' interview referenced Core Values with 72 mentions. Adair's interview consisted of 12 responses addressing Core Values, or 39 percent. These results reflect the sentiments emphasizing TSU provisional responses and core values in the statements categorized below.

Prospective Focus

R_1: How did each university utilize prospective post-crisis discourse?

TSU President Dr. John M. Rudley knew right away what legislators in the state capital of Austin expected from TSU, said Pickens. Immediately upon the start of his appointment he traveled to Austin and promised that he could repair the damage. He was given two weeks to find a staff and another two weeks to develop a strategic plan. Rudley accomplished both tasks. Pickens' office designed a "communication piece" or brochure that embraced Rudley's plan. The cover of the brochure clearly praised Rudley's prospective focus and his ability to carry the

university to more stable and effective footing under the TSU Now mentality. This brochure titled A Renaissance of Excellence stated the following on the cover (emphasis added by researcher):

> Texas Southern University has embarked on a historic transformation to move the institution into the foreground of major urban-serving universities. The TSU Board of Regents launched the new direction with the hiring of Dr. John M. Rudley in February 2008. Today, a dramatic renaissance is occurring at Texas Southern University. The administrative and academic departments are changing, and the outstanding traditions and positive legacies of Texas Southern are being *renewed*.

Belinda Griffin, a former TSU board member fired after the Slade scandal, expressed in the *Houston Chronicle* her personal desire for TSU to move on. "It's time for the university, the community and the new administration to focus on the best interests of the students at TSU. I'm for one, just glad this is behind us," (Rogers, March 26, 2008). Trey Barton, a TSU junior said in a *USA TODAY* article "now we have a new president who's taking care of keeping order," (Lozano, July 14, 2008).

The *HBCU Blog* (June 30, 2009) reported that Rudley planned to have private auditors examine TSU's financial records for the next five years. This was an effort to not only bring stability, but also maintain it. This decision also demonstrated stewardship in providing transparency into TSU's financial situation, a new practice for the university. The 2009 audit was the first time in many years a complete tally of the school's financial position could be calculated. This process took two years, as the original firm hired quit working with TSU because the records were in such disarray. In addition to achieving a successful audit, TSU was able to use its own reserve funds to handle $16 million in repairs needed from the damaged caused by Hurricane Ike in September 2008 (Butler, Winter 2009). Financial self-support of this magnitude was not possible during the previous TSU administration.

Jasmine Pope, 2007 student government president at TSU, provided a comment to the

campus student-run newspaper, the *TSU Herald*, regarding the students' prospective focus. "Despite what's going on outside of the university, Texas Southern University will keep going and remain strong. Although there is no definite line we can draw to separate ourselves from Dr. Slade and her issues, we just want to move forward from this and continue to shine" (Monroe, August 31, 2007).

Adair said that three years into repairing the financial situation at TSU, it is now time to focus on improving academics. One academic renewal effort that demonstrates a prospective, forward-thinking focus is TSU's involvement in the Tom Joyner Foundation initiative, HBCUs Online. Nationally syndicated radio host Tom Joyner and his son Tom Joyner, Jr. have created an effort to help increase HBCU enrollment. Joyner, Jr. is in charge of this initiative. Joyner and son are both proud HBCU graduates. They graduated from Tuskegee University and Howard University, respectively. This initiative to engage HBCUs in online learning and degree programs is a concentrated effort to help HBCUs especially compete with for-profit colleges. Texas Southern University, and coincidently Hampton University, were the first schools to join. TSU now offers three online master's degree programs: master's in public administration and education and an executive MBA (Kever, October 31, 2010).

Rudley and his administration made a major change transitioning the university from its previous policy of open admissions to a closed policy, requiring entrants to meet some academic standards. *African-American News & Issues*, a black paper serving all of Texas, called Rudley's decision to increase admissions requirements gambling on a sure thing (Williams, September 15-21, 2010). The school's enrollment dropped from about 11,000 to approximately 9,500 after this policy was implemented. However, Rudley considered this a "good thing." He said "we had about 2,000 people who had no intention of graduating. Among those dropped from the rolls were 400 students who had accumulated all 'Fs' (Williams, September 15-21, 2010). The move

was considered controversial to some because HBCUs are known for flexible admissions standards, giving all who want a chance an opportunity to attend college. Rudley combatted this idea by saying he feels these students are better suited to at least initially attend community colleges that are "better equipped to meet the needs of people who require a little more help" (Williams, September 15-21, 2010).

Since Rudley took over at TSU, retention rates have also improved, likely a result of the new admissions standards. *The Houston Sun* reports that in fall 2009 TSU had a 67 percent retention rate, up eight percent from the previous year. "One of the things our studies reveal is that we would never be able to increase our graduation rate, until we improve our retention rate. So we are putting our resources into assuring that our students stay in school and graduate" said James Douglas, TSU executive vice president who leads the school's Urban Academic Village initiative (*The Houston Sun*, October 29, 2009). TSU has embraced stewardship and renewal by honoring the traditional HBCU village or family-like learning environment and now provides students with mentors and regular motivational speakers to help ensure student retention and success.

Rudley has also focused on recruiting more out-of-state students to attend TSU. This is an effort to reach potential students who are not focused on the missteps in TSU's past. The *Houston Chronicle* reported that Michigan student Kayla Hurse, who graduated high school with a 3.9 GPA turned down a scholarship to DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois to attend TSU. Hurse said the likes the "family feeling" at TSU. "I want a network I can turn to since I am so far from home," she said (Kever, September 20, 2010). A recruitment advertisement, seen below in Figure 6, used by TSU demonstrates the university's prospective focus in terms of the new admissions environment.

Opportunities

R_2: What opportunities arose as a result of each university crisis and how did each institution seize these opportunities?

The Texas Southern multi-faceted crisis left the university with several opportunities for improvement. To address the initial issue of campus safety, the TSU communications office now has a functional crisis communication plan and utilizes emergency text messaging service. It is a university-wide plan that includes students, community, administrators, and the police department.

Pickens serves on the newly formed Crisis Information Management Team. This group meets monthly and includes representatives from Pickens' office, the president's office, and the campus police department. Pickens and the TSU communications office also turned the new academic and admissions standards into a community relations opportunity. They held a town hall meeting in order to gain community support for the initiative. Pickens said there was a core group who didn't understand the need for the new standards and that if academic improvement was not shown, the university was set to lose over $10 million in state funding. Students also attended the town hall meeting. Academically focused students were in favor of the new initiative because they did not want to be in classes with students who were ill prepared.

"Once upon a time the kids weren't buying books because they were here to party…but now you're seeing kids going to class and actually reporting faculty members who are not showing up for the classes," said Pickens, describing the new student culture at TSU. As mentioned student retention has also increased. "We're not losing as many of them anymore," said Pickens.

Another change currently being implemented is the building of new dormitories to increase the percentage of students who live on campus. Increasing the number of on campus

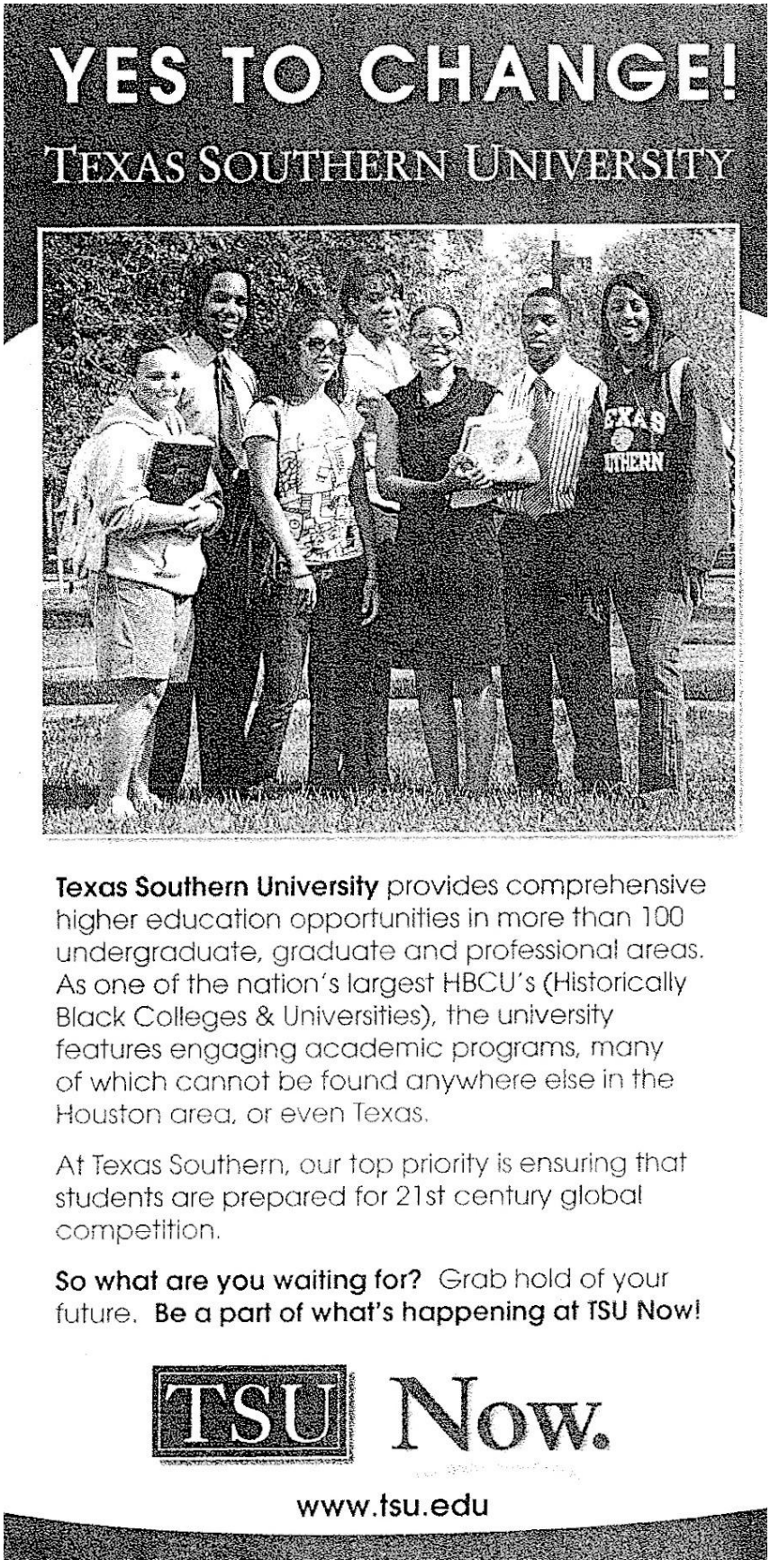


FIGURE 6
TSU NOW RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT

students seizes the opportunity to focus on TSU Now and to enhance the supportive village atmosphere. Currently, only 20 percent of TSU's 9,500 students live on campus. Rudley plans for 5,000 students to live on campus by 2015.

Provisional Responses

R_3: How did each HBCU use provisional discourse in order to rebuild or restore order post-crisis?

As former chief financial officer at the university, Dr. John Rudley began to orchestrate a recovery plan immediately upon his arrival back at TSU. "We must start with understanding. We are dealing with a crisis management situation currently at Texas Southern," Rudley said to the local KPRC 2 station in Houston (2008). "We must restore fiscal credibility in administration. We must restore credibility to decision-making at Texas Southern University. I believe we can accomplish both," he said.

In addition to proving TSU's new fiscal integrity, Rudley's overall goal is to make TSU "one of the best public urban serving institutions of higher education," he said (Butler, Winter 2009). This goal is set to be achieved with the new academic standards, new fiscal policies, continued state support, and community collaborations. In (Butler, Winter 2009) Rudley also boasted the university's strong line-up of quality programs, specifically citing public affairs, communications, and business.

The Texas Southern University *Vision Statement* echoes Rudley's sentiments.

> Texas Southern University will become one of the nation's pre-eminent comprehensive metropolitan universities. We will be recognized by the excellence of our programs, the quality of our instruction, our innovative research, and our desire to be a contributing partner to our community, state, nation, and world.

The president implemented a student success piece that was previously missing, said Pickens. He is giving them academic counseling in each of the colleges and schools, and he is giving every freshman and sophomore a mentor. "So now we feel like we have a nurturing

environment for those students because a lot of our students are first generation college students," said Pickens. TSU also now offers a "Summer Academy" that students can attend to bridge the gap between high school and college. This program is for students who do not quite meet the new higher admissions standards and if they are not able to succeed in this program, they can enroll in a "2+2" program with a local community college. Students in the 2+2 program attend community college for their first two years and TSU accepts their credits upon transfer the third year.

Rudley stated in the TSU 2009 *Annual Report* that the university has

> showcased an expansion of services, modalities, and constituencies…to firmly position Texas Southern as an educational institution fully capable of preparing its students and graduates for successful competition in today's and tomorrow's expanding global marketplace.

The *HBCU Blog* (June 30, 2009) said TSU cleared a "major hurdle" in the areas of recruiting and fundraising when SACS lifted the university's probationary status. "It's a big deal," said Rudley. "Parents who were reluctant to send their children to TSU because its accreditation was in doubt now can feel secure," Rudley added that the probation revocation reaffirms the value of the TSU degree. "Now TSU can go about the business of being a normal university."

In addition to appealing to potential students and enhancing the experience of current students, TSU has also demonstrated provisional responses in the area of alumni relations. Sylvia Brooks, a TSU alumna and organizer of the 2010 Alumni Summit said in a TSU press release that this is an important effort.

> We must continue to expand communication with our alumni and increase resources to the university. This is a good time to understand why it is so important for alumni to become reacquainted with their alma mater. This is an opportunity to engage and reengage the support and commitment of the alumni.

> The alumni are vital to the life of any university, and TSU is no different from other universities. It needs the support. The goal of the Summit is for all in attendance to leave committed by signing up to support and volunteer wherever TSU needs them.

Along the same lines, another TSU press release announced the reactivation of the alumni chapter in Nigeria. Rudley, TSU Provost Sunny Ohia, and Adair traveled to Africa in July 2009 not only to renew the Nigerian TSU alumni chapter, but also to meet with government officials in Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Tanzania to recruit students and to develop a faculty and student exchange program.

In the 2009 *Annual Report* Rudley summarized his vision for TSU and the corresponding provisional responses.

> We are fully committed to improving upon our past successes to ensure continued institutional growth. And we are confident that today's…students will do their part, as their elders before them, to create an even bolder institutional legacy for Texas Southern University.

Core Values

R_4: How did institutional or overall HBCU values drive the renewal process?

As mentioned, Pickens realizes the importance of community relations and buy-in for all of the new initiatives being implemented at TSU. She said the university gets a lot of "push-back," when community members have to find out about a change after the fact. TSU has to involve the community in all major decision-making, according to Pickens.

"The community is very much a part of Texas Southern. The alumni, even with their limited giving, they want to be included in the major decisions, and we have now mastered that," said Pickens. "They helped to build our very first building, the Fairchild Building. They all paid a dollar for the bricks. So, they proudly tell that to their children--who remember, and refuse to be left out of any major decisions," she said.

Generational support is essential at TSU. In the 2009 *Annual Report* Rudley discussed how legacies, multiple generations of matriculation, are deeply rooted in HBCU tradition and especially TSU tradition. He said this speaks to "multi-generational satisfaction" in the college experience at Texas Southern. It also demonstrates appreciation for a TSU education.

In the report Rudley also mentions the importance of diversity at a school like TSU. "Texas Southern, in true HBCU fashion, has become ground zero for diversity, the institutional trait most referred to by social forecasters as critical for 21st century success. Graduate schools and employers seek to diversify their institutions look to HBCUs first."

Summary

Texas Southern University was nearly shut down due to the multiple financial and administrative failures and academic inadequacies at the university. All of these issues came to light as a result of the murder of a TSU student and the subsequently uncovered financial scandal perpetuated by the then president. The problems TSU experienced were highly publicized and criticized, especially since the university had no communications professionals to help diffuse the situation during this time of crisis. This recipe for disaster presented an extraordinary challenge for the university, not only in terms of image, but also in terms of its actual existence.

The appointment of a new president, new administrators and a new communications staff has led the university into recovery. Findings indicate that the public relations and post-crisis communication efforts led by Pickens have helped the university to gain positive publicity and community support. Full recovery will take years, given the magnitude of this multi-faceted crisis and the major cultural changes implemented post-crisis at TSU. Proper actions are now being taken to ensure the continued recovery and success of the university. TSU has learned from its many years of mistakes. The university is now run by experienced administrators who are passionate about the university. These administrators have also moved to create a more

capable student body and active alumni base. The development and use of a crisis communication plan, communications evaluation methods and continuous extensive community relations activities are now creating a recipe for stability, prosperity and longevity at Texas Southern University.

CHAPTER 6
XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AND HURRICANE KATRINA

"When we left on that Friday evening, everyone said, 'ehh, we will be back Monday; another false alarm,' and clearly that wasn't the case." – Warren Bell

The above quote from Xavier University of Louisiana Associate Vice President for University and Media Relations, Warren Bell describes the initial disbelief in the magnitude of the Hurricane Katrina situation. This chapter presents interview and documentation results specific to the Hurricane Katrina and aftermath experience had by Xavier University of Louisiana and the university's subsequent recovery. Bell and Director of Publications, Richard Tucker were interviewed 16 documents were analyzed. Results are presented in terms of discourse of renewal factors. The researcher also provides a description of the director of public relations' professional background as well as a description of the Xavier University of Louisiana public relations staff and primary office functions.

Introduction

Xavier University of Louisiana was the most prepared of the three universities. Though a natural disaster and aftermath of the magnitude of Hurricane Katrina could never fully be planned for, the Xavier administration and communications office did have vital crisis management measures in play before the storm hit. Warren Bell, associate vice president of university and media relations at Xavier University of Louisiana, explained that his office was able to function externally after the storm.

Bell, a graduate of Yale University has served in his current position for seven years. Bell came to Xavier with more than 30 years of journalism and communication experience. He started out in radio as a high school student and he continued in college working also in print news and television. He worked mostly in television for the next 25 years. Bell also taught mass

communication and journalism for 18 years as an adjunct faculty member at another HBCU in New Orleans, Dillard University.

Bell supervises a media relations manager, a director of publications, the university photographer who does some graphic design, and a marketing and special projects employee. Xavier also has a full-time graphic designer who does not report directly to Bell, but often contributes to university relations work. The media relations manager is the primary media contact for the office. The marketing and special projects person covers anything that does not fall under media relations including advertising work and video projects. Richard Tucker, the director of publications handles all weekly print and online periodicals. Bell works very closely with Tucker and says Tucker "really has an incredible responsibility."

Tucker is a graduate of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After college he worked for the then *East Bank Guide* newspaper in the New Orleans suburb of Metairie, Louisiana. He worked for this publication in sports and in news. He eventually served as the publication's sports and news director before beginning work at Xavier in 1979. He has been at Xavier ever since.

Tucker is the sole writer of all Xavier publications distributed from the university and media relations office. He says he only occasionally uses copy from another staff members. He is responsible for the *Xavier Gold* alumni magazine, which is published once to twice per year and the university annual report. Tucker also writes the *This Month at Xavier* or "*T-Max,*" and online newspaper for students who have applied for admissions. *It Happens at Xavier* is a monthly hard copy version of T-Max, but not an exact replica. *Eye on Xavier* is a printed newsletter that is released three times a year.

Bell has an excellent working relationship and friendship with Dr. Norman Francis, president of Xavier.

> I tell everyone how hard is it for me to have my job when I work for a rock star for a president? I mean, he is the equivalent of a rock star in higher education. He's the longest sitting president [and] he's charming and articulate, said Bell. And I've got to say, our president obviously knew more than any of us did [during the crisis] said Bell.

In terms of day-to-day media relations Bell said his office has an overall good working relationship with media. However, the racial climate of the City of New Orleans sometimes affects perceptions of the university.

> Unfortunately I think that may have something to do with the unfortunate persistent problem of race here, and racial attitudes. There are still people in this community I think who think this is an all-black institution that probably doesn't even need to exist anymore because after all, we've got integration, said Bell.

He said, some local citizens do not understand the diverse contributions Xavier makes to the greater community. He said certain individual reporters do not respond to Xavier, but he said that no one, white or black gets everything they want covered by media. Bell said that, despite the distorted perceptions of some individuals, he believes among HBCUs, Xavier shines in the media. He says this is due to Xavier's unique Catholic affiliation and the president's ability to strategically navigate the mainstream and African American communities.

The Crisis

The Catholic News Service stated that Xavier incurred about $90million in reconstruction costs (Zimmermann, October 24, 2005) as a result of Katrina. Zimmerman (October 24, 2005) also said that like other HBCUs, Xavier's relatively small endowment, which was $50million in 2005, was not sufficient to use for recovery efforts. Endowment funds were primarily restricted for scholarships and the school's insurance covered the wind damage, but not the extensive water damage. The university was ultimately able to raise the funds needed to repair the school. Funds were donated from various public and private sources, explained below. Despite these challenges, Xavier was intent on reopening as soon as possible.

Bell's account of the crisis events and response includes campus recovery efforts as well as the personal challenges he endured, as Hurricane Katrina was a New Orleans citywide crisis where all residents were affected. Bell chronicled in handwritten notes the crisis communication and management activities implemented in the time surrounding the storm. He took notes in order to ensure he was able to keep track of all pertinent information regardless of the availability of technology. He kept notes from a few days before the storm hit until the campus reopening in January 2006. He had to evaluate all of the updates university-wide and determine what information need to be publicized. Then, he and Tucker took responsibility for disseminating the updates.

Bell's daughter was an undergraduate student at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge at the time and Bell was able to stay with her immediately upon evacuating from New Orleans. Shortly after that time, once he realized that his stay would not be short-term, Bell rented an apartment in Baton Rouge. The emergency and recovery communications efforts were primarily run from Baton Rouge. Bell and Tucker, the only team members available or accessible in the immediate days after the storm, began to produce crisis communication newsletters titled the *Road to Recovery Series*. Bell and Tucker were able to use donated physical office space on the campus of Our Lady of the Lake Hospital in Baton Rouge. "We had basically a glorified classroom," said Bell. In early September 2005 Bell returned to the Xavier campus to retrieve vital equipment.

Bell recalled his experience returning to campus shortly after the storm: "in the dark with the slime on the steps and everything else, I personally came and rescued stuff." He had to unplug the computers in his department and he cited the critical nature of recovering university and media relations data. He grabbed as many hard drives as possible along with his and Tucker's computer monitors because he had no idea how long it would take to order new

equipment. Post-crisis communication was facilitated more quickly since he and Tucker were able to use equipment they were already familiar with. Bell explained:

> We had a pretty good situation in a fairly short amount of time. We quickly had a location from which to do our emergency communications. We were fortunate enough to have had the foresight to enable ourselves with two means of communication.

Before the storm struck Xavier had an emergency telephone line and arrangement for external emergency website hosting, explained below.

Even after experiencing functionality problems with email service, Bell and other Xavier division heads were able to keep in touch using the Nextel click and talk system. This was the primary method of communication for several weeks between the administrators working to revive Xavier after the storm. Additionally, Bell acquired a single lens reflex digital camera because the university photographer was unable to immediately return to work and the existing office photographic equipment was damaged or inaccessible. Bell had the insight to begin creating photo documentation of the damage and recovery. He decided it was essential to post images of the cleanup and reconstruction progress on the website in order to communicate that the school would soon reopen.

Bell said he was really encouraged by the national media response to Xavier during the primary rebuilding phase in the fall of 2005. “I think they were quite attracted to our story because it was pretty compelling to see people hell-bent on coming back at a time when even the city didn't have its act together yet,” said Bell. The main goal during the rebuilding months was to communicate that Xavier would return. Bell understood that the city had not restored essential services, but he still had to convince parents and students that Xavier was capable of operating as a self-contained and safe community. Bell applauds national media for keeping Xavier in the mix of their post-Katrina coverage. In order to ensure this coverage Bell cited his use of National Association of Broadcast Journalists (NABJ) connections as well as Dr. Francis’ well-known

status. Bell contacted his friends and colleagues in NABJ and requested that they highlight Xavier's story of recovery.

Crisis Response

Xavier used a variety of strategies and tactics in pre-crisis planning and in the months post-Katrina. Bell explained the primary messages conveyed and the tools used to disseminate these messages. Pre-Katrina, Bell and his team set up an emergency phone line that they used frequently during the "critical nights" right after the storm. This line is still in operation and can be activated if another crisis occurs. During a crisis anyone can call 1-866-520-XULA for information. This is a vital service especially if and when more modern communication technologies fail. Bell can record an information message from any phone by entering a code and simply speaking the message.

Bell and members of the Xavier administration also had the foresight to have prepared an emergency website. It was "without all the bells and whistles of our full web site, but it gave us the ability to continue from a distance," said Bell. This website allowed Xavier to maintain a homepage and distribute emergency messages during an immediately after the storm, even when the backup generators on campus were not functioning. Bell proudly said these pre-set systems gave Xavier an advantage in the immediate aftermath of the storm. Xavier University in Ohio distributed a press release with notification that it would temporarily host the Xavier University of Louisiana website (Del Valle, September 28, 2005). Bell was contacted by Xavier in Ohio that offered to help in any way it could and hosting the emergency website was a major contribution to the effectiveness of Xavier of Louisiana's crisis communication. This website along with the emergency telephone line and print publications were the primary communication tools used in the months immediately following the storm communicating recovery updates.

Dr. Francis held weekly conference calls with Bell and other senior staff members and department heads. During this time all of the conference participants were spread throughout Louisiana and other southern states in their personal places of refuge. However, they managed to handle the business of reopening Xavier. The calls consisted of each department head reporting recovery updates for his or her area. Bell recalls the business-as-usual atmosphere of the conference calls. He said they were essentially no different than Francis' regular weekly cabinet meetings. Bell was also in contact with Francis by telephone on a regular basis during the time everyone was displaced. Francis made it very clear that Bell needed to convey the primary message that Xavier would reopen the following semester.

Discourse of Renewal Efforts

The previous sections provided an explanation of the daily public relations practice at Xavier University of Louisiana as well as a description of the crisis atmosphere and the subsequent university response. This section will directly address the research questions of this study. Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) was used to determine how Xavier University of Louisiana implemented discourse of renewal efforts. Keyword analysis, along with the analysis of themes and phrases featured in documentation evidence helped the researcher to categorize these efforts. The researcher also used personal knowledge of HBCU public relations to place discourse in the proper contexts. Below is a summary the *NVivo* analysis of Bell's and Tucker's responses in terms of the discourse of renewal. Additionally, a breakdown of university actions and responses according to the discourse of renewal factors is described.

NVivo Analysis

The researcher conducted an *NVivo* keyword and synonym Boolean search of Bell's and Tucker's unedited interview transcripts. Key words used to code for prospective focus were renewal, rebuilding, recovery, and future. The word opportunity was the only key word searched

for under the opportunity code. Provisional responses key words were vision, president; Francis (the last name of the president); and goals. Values, history, tradition, safety, standards, and reputation served as key words for the core values code. Bell expressed Prospective Focus 21 times during the interview. *NVivo* calculates the value of each keyword response and these references represent 21 percent of his total response. Tucker demonstrated Prospective Focus six times representing eight percent of his response. Bell made seven Opportunities references during his interview, valued at seven percent. Tucker did not reference any Opportunities. Bell provided 54, or 60 percent Provisional Responses representing the majority of his interview. Tucker mentioned 10 Provisional Responses, representing 21 percent of his interview. Bell referenced Core Values with 36 mentions representing 36 percent. Tucker's interview consisted of 11 responses addressing Core Values, or 18 percent.

Prospective Focus

R_1: How did each university utilize prospective post-crisis discourse?

Bell said the overriding recovery message was: "Don't get too settled." For students this meant they should temporarily enroll at another university during Xavier's closure. Faculty were encouraged to take temporary teaching assignments. For faculty, Xavier also wanted them to know that the majority of them would be paid to return in January 2006. There were some faculty and staff layoffs, as the university was only able to maintain salaries for "critical staff" during the rebuilding phase. Bell personally had to layoff three of his communications staff members during this time.

Zimmermann (October 24, 2005) described Norman Francis' long history of working on small and large scales to improve conditions Xavier. As a freshman in 1948 he completed work-study in the library where his job was to repair damaged books. Decades later, Francis was charged with repairs on a much larger, "colossal" scale. After Katrina, Francis had to use his

multitude of Xavier experiences to drive the repair and renewal of the entire university using his visionary leadership style.

The aim was to retain at least two-thirds of students "so that we could resume our efforts and our mission," said Bell. Xavier's *Mission Statement* expresses prospective focus not just in times of crisis, but at all times. It discusses the university's aim to improve and advance society as a whole.

> The ultimate purpose of the University is to contribute to the promotion of a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society. This preparation takes place in a diverse learning and teaching environment that incorporates all relevant educational means, including research and community service.

Student retention was successful. In January 2006, 3,100 students returned exceeding Xavier's expectations.

The other primary focus post-Katrina was to engage in a massive a fundraising effort to gain funds for rebuilding. Bell explained the great need to raise money to cover the "extraordinary costs" of repairing and renovating the campus. He said this was extremely difficult because the crisis was not campus-wide, but citywide. Renovating in the midst of a nearly completely devastated city added an extra challenge. However, Bell led Xavier in widely communicating its ambitious goals for recovery and donors responded favorably. This effort was also successful beyond expectations. Xavier not only saw an increase in alumni giving, but in donations from individuals and corporations previously unaffiliated with the school. Bell says these new donors were moved by the news stories they heard about Xavier rebuilding and reopening against all odds.

The university still held a 2006 graduation ceremony in August as opposed to the traditional May commencement. Then Senator Barack Obama served as graduation speaker. Bell proudly explained that Xavier still had more black student graduates set to attend medical school

that year than any other university. Xavier University of Louisiana is renowned for its high percentage of graduating seniors accepted to medical schools on a yearly basis and for its pharmacy program. As President, Barack Obama returned to the Xavier campus in 2010 to commemorate the five year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and his visit symbolized the full circle of recovery on this campus.

In addition to the ongoing use of technologies that were first implemented after Hurricane Katrina such as external website hosting and the emergency telephone line, in the post-crisis years Bell's office has also utilized various other practices that were born out of Xavier's time of crisis. Now at Xavier, as a complement to the emergency telephone hotline there is also an emergency website available that is set to display crisis communication information whenever necessary. This website can be found at http://www.xulaemergency.com. Prior to the hurricane the University and Media Relations Office published a printed weekly piece titled *This Week at Xavier*. However, printing and physical distribution was not possible in the immediate weeks after the storm so Bell decided to convert it to an electronic weekly bulletin and *This Week at Xavier* has been continuously published ever since the time of crisis. Bell also decided to characterize the publication as a magazine instead of a newsletter in order to enter it for departmental and industry awards. Bell said he is always thinking of the promotional aspect of communication tactics, always seeking ways to enhance the positive recognition his office and the university earns.

A campus emergency text messaging system has also been added to Xavier's crisis communication arsenal since the time of Hurricane Katrina. The E2 Campus messaging service was first implemented in January 2011. It allows Bell to easily send voice, text, and email messages simultaneously. "If I don't want to take the time to record the message, I can type it,

and it has voice software so that the computer voice turns your message into a phone call that is duplicate of what is going out to e-mail and texts," said Bell.

Though the technology can be helpful in a time of crisis, Bell recognizes that complete dependence on these services is not feasible. The costs associated with text messaging especially causes a problem with reaching the entire campus. The voluntary opt-in to these newer technologies make it essential to use a mix of traditional and new media crisis communication tactics. Bell stated that people are however, increasingly seeing the need for services such as emergency text messaging. These services can be and are used by Xavier not only during disasters, but lesser emergencies such as power outages or water shortages.

Tucker described a new policy, implemented post-Katrina, designed to better prepare students in the event of an evacuation. Now on-campus students must sign an agreement that they have a hurricane plan that includes how they plan to evacuate and where they plan to stay during such a situation.

Students responded to Xavier's efforts to encourage their return. Students were optimistic about the January 2006 reopening. One student described the experience as returning home.

Regina McCutcheon, Xavier student government association president at the time of the 2006 reopening discussed in a NPR interview the students' prospective focus at that time. She said it felt like the students personally overcame a major obstacle, but it also felt like they were picking up right where they left off. She said some described it as "returning from a very long weekend" (Block, January 17, 2006). McCutcheon also described one of her classes on that first day back, demonstrating the institutional spirit of prospective focus in renewal.

> The teacher is a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament and she began class with a prayer, and that prayer motivated students to prepare themselves academically for the upcoming school year. She prayed for the university. She prayed for the students' continued success. She prayed over the losses that we've all

> experienced. She prayed…for the preservation of our university. So, you know, it felt great to be back at home and to be back learning where we're used to learning.

McCutcheon went on to graduate from Xavier and she began as a student at Tulane University Medical School in August 2006 (Block, January 17, 2006).

Opportunities

R_2: What opportunities arose as a result of each university crisis and how did each institution seize these opportunities?

Students were excited to return to Xavier when the campus reopened. They felt a sense of loyalty to the university and personal collegiate experiences and relationships. Students took Xavier's mission to heart and were also loyal to New Orleans and were anxious to return and take the opportunity to assist in the citywide renewal. Traylon Williams, a freshman at the time of the crisis commented on this loyalty and spirit in the Summer 2009 issue of *Eye on Xavier*.

> I wanted to be a part of the rebuilding of my city. Not coming back or giving back through community service wouldn't benefit the city. The more people that come back and give back, the better our city will become.

In the same spirit of seizing an opportunity for public service and stewardship, Xavier University created a community diary on the campus website to commemorate the 5th anniversary Hurricane Katrina. The *Katrina Memorial Electronic Journal* at http://www.xula.edu/katrina/ allowed anyone to submit reflections and photographs. Some people chronicled their personal experiences while some wrote poetry to describe their feelings. The site is still open for public comment.

In addition to demonstrating caring public service, Xavier was also presented with significant economic opportunities as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was impressed with Xavier's aggressive rebuilding and awarded the school "hazard mitigation funding," explained in a (March 13, 2009) FEMA press release.

The $1.3million in funding was awarded to help the campus install waterproof protection to the exterior and entrance doors of the Xavier South building, administrative offices, and the school power plant. This will protect the school not only during hurricanes, but also during intense rainstorms common in south Louisiana. FEMA also contributed $49.9million to the university's massive repair efforts. Tony Russell, 2009 acting director of the FEMA Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office commented on this funding.

> Our goal is to provide this university with the tools it needs to withstand future floods in a way that it continues to prepare its students for professional roles in our society. FEMA is pleased to contribute to the strengthening of this higher learning institution.

Xavier also received an unexpected "windfall" grant in May 2008 from the country of Qatar. The $17.5million donation was used to construct Xavier's newest addition, the Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion.

Xavier not only received economic opportunities post-Katrina, but also provided them as a social responsible member of the New Orleans community. The *Xavier Gold* Spring 2010 alumni magazine highlighted an economic impact study featuring Xavier. The study conducted by an economist at Medaille College in New York showed that Xavier is a significant contributor to the New Orleans economy. According to the study Xavier generates more than $320million for the city. The university is a major employer in the city, providing more than 4,200 jobs in Orleans Parish. This shows, in addition to the physical rebuilding of the university, the financial renewal of the institution to the point it is able significantly contribute to its surrounding area.

Another opportunity for Xavier to gain positive national attention post-Katrina was the appointment of alumna Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA by President Barack Obama as the United States Surgeon General in July 2009. The Senate unanimously confirmed Benjamin. She is currently working on promoting her *Vision for a Healthy and Fit Nation*. Xavier publicized

Benjamin's appointment once again touting the university's major contributions to the practice of medicine.

Provisional Responses

R_3: How did each HBCU use provisional discourse in order to rebuild or restore order post-crisis?

In the Spring 2010 *Xavier Gold* issue, Norman Francis applauded Xavier's recovery. He said five years post-Katrina, the university continues to achieve specifically in the areas of acquisitions and property development. He was especially proud of the Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion and the St. Katharine Drexel Chapel. These facilities are generating new excitement and interest in the Xavier campus.

Bell told the story of Francis' vision to quickly rebuild, reopen, and renew after Katrina. Bell described how Francis as the leader of the institution was determined to see this vision come to fruition, despite all, including Bell, who doubted his ambitious timeline. Some said Francis was led by a vision from St. Katharine. Bell explained that even when no one agreed with him, that Francis was determined to proceed. Francis insisted to Bell that the message had to get out that Xavier would soon be back. It is clear Francis' vision came to fruition exceeding even his own expectations.

President Barack Obama in his 5th year anniversary speech at Xavier said that Francis is a powerful leader. Obama gave Francis credit for representing the resilient spirit of New Orleans. The White House issued a press release featuring the transcript of this speech on (August 29, 2010).

> Some said he was crazy. Some said it couldn't happen. But they didn't count on what happens when one force of nature meets another. And by January—four months later—class was in session. Less than a year after the storm, I had the privilege of delivering a commencement address to the largest graduating class in Xavier's history. That is a symbol of what New Orleans is all about.

Rebuilding Xavier University of Louisiana (March 2006) is a renewal communication tactic souvenir book created by Bell's office. "I call it the 'coffee table book,'" said Bell about this publication that has an accompanying video. Both the book and the video are archived on the Xavier communications website. "Our coffee table special is a wonderful piece that simply chronicled in pictures and words what had happened in those critical months before we reopened," said Bell. The cover of this booklet featuring a provisional response quote about the recovery from Xavier President Dr. Norman Francis is displayed below in Figure 7. Francis' statement on the coffee table book cover reads:

> What happened to New Orleans represents the greatest disaster this country has ever had. That we were able to come back in such a short period of time is a credit to the faith, commitment, and passion of our staff and faculty, who put aside their personal losses and problems to make this miracle happen.

Zimmermann (October 24, 2005) also quoted Francis' comments on the renewal. Francis said he never expected to have to face a challenge of this magnitude. He said he had to use the whole sum of his faith and life experiences to accomplish this daunting task. Francis also said he believes that Xavier sits on "holy grounds," thus being a prime location for the "miracle" of the school's expeditious reopening to occur. Similarly, the (March 13, 2009) FEMA press release said Xavier's organization and efficiency is "amazing." Tiffany Willis, 2009 Xavier student government chief of staff, said Xavier "proved…how dedicated they are to St. Katharine Drexel's vision, the faculty, and the students" (FEMA, March 13, 2009). The persistence of not only the university, but also the students is demonstrated by the 2009 senior class theme "From the Storm to the Stage." This theme illustrates their journey from freshman at the strike of the hurricane to graduating seniors in 2009 (*Eye on Xavier*, Summer 2009).

Core Values

R_4: How did institutional or overall HBCU values drive the renewal process?

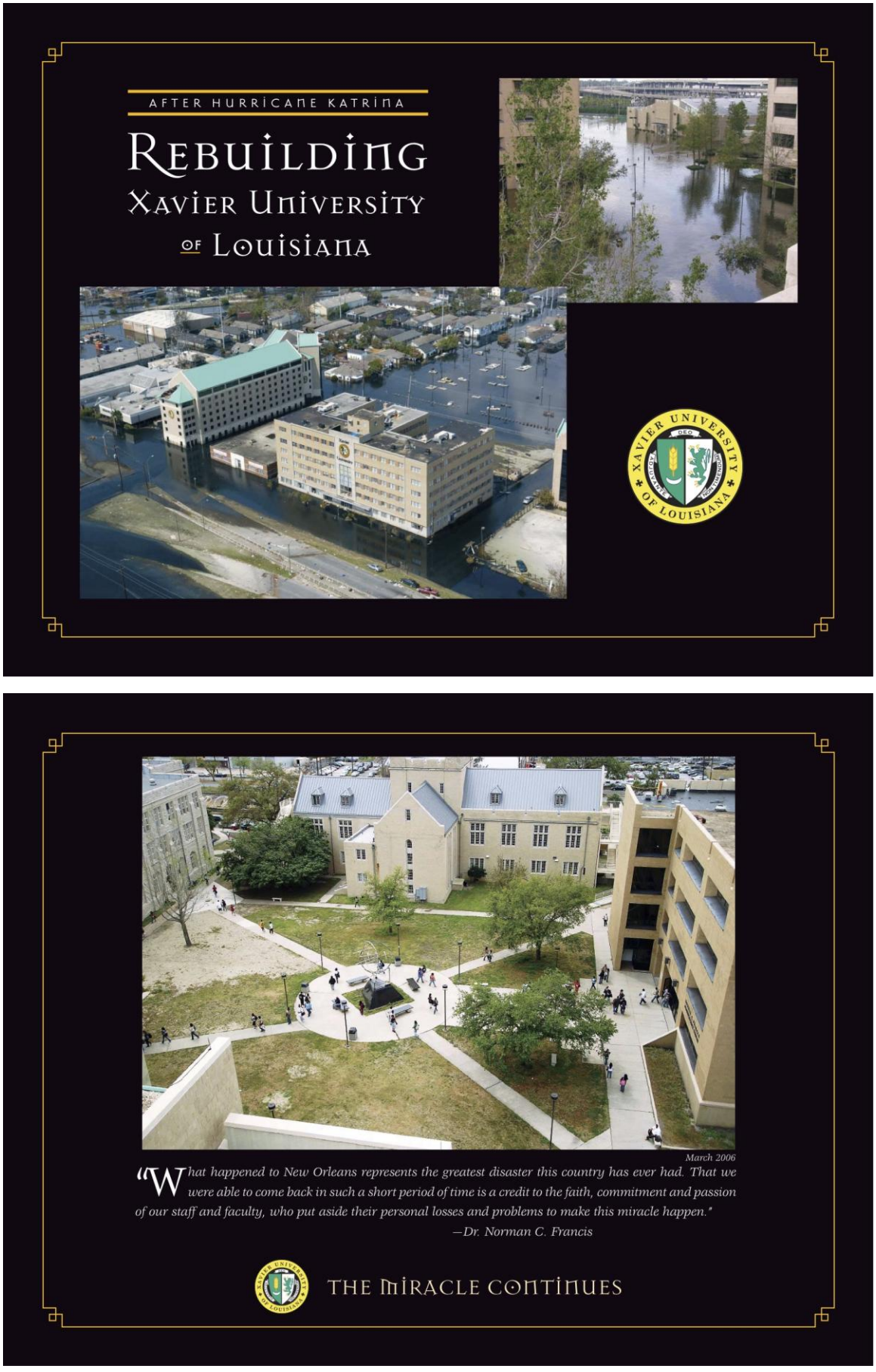


FIGURE 7
XAVIER REBUILDING BOOKLET COVER

Xavier's core values are displayed prominently throughout its recovery and renewal process. Most prevalent is the students' desire and drive to return. Former student government president, Regina McCutcheon said to NPR that during Xavier's closure she attended Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but she never thought of making this transfer permanent. "The family atmosphere here, the love….We had to come back and we had to have our school back on its feet," she said (Block, January 17, 2006).

Eye on Xavier (Summer 2009) said most students had established bonds with the campus and with their friends before the storm. "Their experience at other campuses did not compare to the warm family feeling, the sense of belonging and camaraderie they felt at Xavier," the newsletter says. In the same issue, Takena Reese a College of Pharmacy student, admitted to enter Xavier in 2005 summed up this sentiment. "There is absolutely no place in the whole wide world that is like Xavier or New Orleans," she said. "I identify with everything Xavier stands for and that's where I needed to be."

These types of statements echoed throughout Xavier's recovery and reopening as evidenced by student retention and continued success. The pride and dedication shown to Xavier University of Louisiana is representative of traditional HBCU spirit. Xavier's courageous and triumphant and renewal sets an example for not only HBCUs, but also any university or institution facing a crisis.

Summary

Xavier University of Louisiana demonstrated superior crisis preparation, especially given the magnitude of the crisis this institution experienced. Organizations can never fully plan for a natural disaster as devastating as Hurricane Katrina. However, Xavier managed to have vital services in place long before the storm hit and these services proved to be extremely beneficial in their "near miraculous" recovery process, as Warren Bell calls it.

This university's efforts were praised by the media as well as by corporate and private donors. The highly experienced and collegial public relations staff and administration provided an excellent environment for recovery, even in the midst of what at times seemed to be an unrecoverable situation. Bell and his team took the initiative to respond immediately and frequently, while following the administration's orders and vision to reopen the campus one semester after the storm. This institution has also taken the lessons learned from this crisis to further improve the already highly functional public relations office in the spirit of continuous renewal. This was a daunting task, but Xavier's ability to not only meet, but to exceed their recovery goals demonstrated its mastery of effective post-crisis communication. In addition to communication efforts, the entire Xavier University of Louisiana immediate and extended community engaged in a communal effort to ensure that the institution continues to make powerful and positive impacts among HBCUs, New Orleans, America, and the world.

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

All of the universities outlined in this study have demonstrated engagement in the discourse of renewal. While each institution has learned from its respective crisis, all three schools' communications offices are now operating in a prospective manner and have prepared fully functioning crisis communication plans that should make them more prepared than ever before if another crisis should occur. In terms of stewardship, each university has found innovative ways to capitalize on the post-crisis opportunities allowing the schools to continuously grow and strengthen. Even by participating in this study, the public relations directors have secured their university and experience a place in the ever-developing crisis communication knowledge base. Additionally, all of these university public relations directors are now operating under strong, charismatic, visionary leaders. Lastly, each university radiates the true spirit of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Each institution is proud of its traditions and aims to continue to pursue its mission for years to come.

Each university is recovering and renewing successfully. Hampton University has revised and updated campus safety standards. Texas Southern University has recruited a more qualified student body and subsequent higher student retention rates. Xavier University of Louisiana has rebuilt a stronger than ever campus and continues to produce record-breaking numbers of black medical professionals. However, there is always room for improvement in the areas of public relations and crisis communication. The best practices outlined below can provide objective insight for these and other universities to use in their communications planning. Each public relations director was transparent during the interview process for this study and all were very knowledgeable about their respective institutions.

The three universities outlined in this study experienced different crises to varying degrees. Overall, each university reacted to the respective crises favorably. However, the data, with the exception of Xavier University of Louisiana, show that proper crisis preparation was lacking and response times were slow. These are problems universities should make all efforts to avoid. Hampton prepared a crisis plan before the incident, but this plan had flaws that led to gaps in effective crisis communication and management. The shooting led to no fatalities, but slow response time and delayed technological notification systems led the image of this university to be vulnerable, especially in a time where school shootings are prevalent in the media and in the public eye. Texas Southern University was not prepared at all to handle a crisis and operated under the worst case scenario of having absolutely no public relations representation. Xavier by far was the most prepared of these three institutions and arguably experienced the most devastating crisis.

All three universities have used these crises as learning experiences and each public relations office is now operating at a higher function than in pre-crisis times. Each university values stewardship and transparent media and community relations as a vital part of renewal efforts. These practices, if continued, will allow these schools to keep building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships. In this time of often-intense skepticism regarding the necessity for and future of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), it is vital that these institutions execute excellent public relations.

Commonalities

The data from this study revealed five primary characteristics of HBCU public relations offices and the directors of these offices. The universities are distinctly different in the histories, missions, physical locations, and types of students they serve. These differences include

Hampton as a private university, Texas Southern as a large public HBCU, and Xavier as the only black Catholic institution. It is important to recognize that HBCUs are not monolithic, but this study revealed that certain distinctive factors are shared by each of the universities. The following characteristics are common among the three.

Each university public relations office is led by a highly experienced communications professional. The leader of each office, who also serves as his or her respective university spokesperson currently has more than ten years of directly related experience in the communication industry. This data also revealed that the public relations directors all began their careers as professional journalists.

All of these universities operate with small, but highly functional public relations offices. Five or less people run the entire communications arm of each of these schools. This is due to lack of funding for additional staff members. Given the small staff, each of these directors makes sure that the office engages in daily media relations, such as pitching stories to gain media coverage and responding to reporter inquiries. The directors also ensure that community relations, writing, and graphic design functions are covered while they themselves focus on communications planning and administrative communication. At HBCUs, directors typically work in dual manager technician roles meaning that they work along with staff members to handle daily public relations tasks and they also enact the management role in which they engage in long-term communication planning, advising, and counseling.

Each director also demonstrated an intense loyalty to his or her respective university and to his or her university president. It is unclear whether this is an example of the high level of HBCU pride discussed in other literature or if each subordinate feels obligated to praise the actions of his or her leader. A combination of both of these sentiments is likely.

When fully functioning, each director and his or her staff maintain mutually beneficial media relationships. All recognize the importance of university image, public engagement and support, and the economic benefits of unpaid media. Media relations is an essential function in these offices because in addition to the economic benefit of unpaid media coverage, positive media representation helps the universities to inform and engage publics. The lack of budget availability to purchase paid advertisements or to employ extensive marketing techniques often used by mainstream universities makes unpaid, earned media coverage an essential part of HBCU public relations practice. This practice also helps to increase the visibility of these institutions.

The last major commonality derived from this data is the high level of self-awareness each public relations director demonstrates. This is in terms of his or her respective university's unique culture, publics, and needs. These directors recognize the major strengths and weaknesses as well as areas that need improvement within their university community and their communications office. This knowledge helps fuel day-to-day communications and it also provides a stable basis for crisis planning and communication.

Best Practices

R_5: What best practices emerge from this data regarding how each institution and other HBCUs might better engage in the discourse of renewal?

The Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) employed in this study revealed the universities' use of discourse of renewal efforts. Keyword analysis, along with the analysis of themes and phrases featured in documentation evidence helped the researcher to categorize these efforts. The researcher also used personal knowledge of HBCU public relations to place discourse in the proper contexts. Additionally, the researcher used an existing best practices

model and the AIDA results of this study to develop best practices recommendations for HBCUs.

The crises experienced by Hampton University, Texas Southern University and Xavier University of Louisiana and the subsequent responses and renewal efforts of each institution have revealed many of the successes and failures that can occur during a crisis situation at an HBCU. Each of these universities has learned how to better prepare for and communicate during a time of crisis should one arise. History and previous literature show that universities will continue to experience crises and the ongoing developments in technology and mass communication almost assures that they will be continuously more publicized. Additionally, all HBCUs are engaged in a seemingly ongoing image crisis and are working to prove that the unique cultures and missions of these institutions are still a necessary facet of American higher education. Each institution can utilize certain general best practices to help ensure that a campus crisis can be successfully navigated and used as a learning experience.

Models

In reviewing the recommendations of a crisis communication expert panel, Seeger (2006) found many commonalities among crisis and risk communication literature and expert advice. He explained that risk communication traditionally focuses on getting specific target audiences to adjust behavior through the dissemination of information on how to avoid identifiable risks such as smoking or drinking and driving. Crisis communication in contrast is typically more concerned with organizational image repair after a crisis. In this study Seeger calls for an integrated approach when designing best practices for organizations, such as HBCUs, that do not wish to focus on blame, but instead stress distributing accurate and useful information in effort to restore order.

Seeger (2006) presented a best practices model for risk and crisis communication (Figure 8). He explained that these are generalized practices based on observations and literature review analysis. Agreeing with (Coombs, 1999), Seeger advocated for an overarching integrated approach to crisis communication.

> Crises and risk are…inherently dynamic and unpredictable. Cookie-cutter approaches to crisis communication are likely to be poorly matched to the exigencies of the specific situation. Many crisis plans, for example, are developed as general outlines rather than step-by-step guides. The former are more adaptable to a variety of situations while the latter approach may be too constraining and misleading (Seeger, 2006, p. 234).

He said his ten best practices are general rather than "specific prescriptions about methods, channels, and messages" (Seeger, 2006, p. 242). Seeger's (2006) practices are not a crisis communication plan, but a model of principles that underlie effective planning and response.

FIGURE 8
BEST PRACTICES IN RISK AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION
(Seeger, 2006, p. 236)

He also said it is important to remember that in any attempt to apply generalized practices should acknowledge that every organization and every crisis is unique and can evolve unpredictably.

Crouse Quinn (2008) also presented a crisis and risk communication strategies model. This model focuses on building relationships with minority populations. Seeger's (2006) model was chosen, however, as a guide for the best practices in this study primarily because it is more concise in addressing crisis communication strategies. Crouse Quinn's (2008) strategies are similar to Seeger's (2006) and are helpful in informing the discussion of this study.

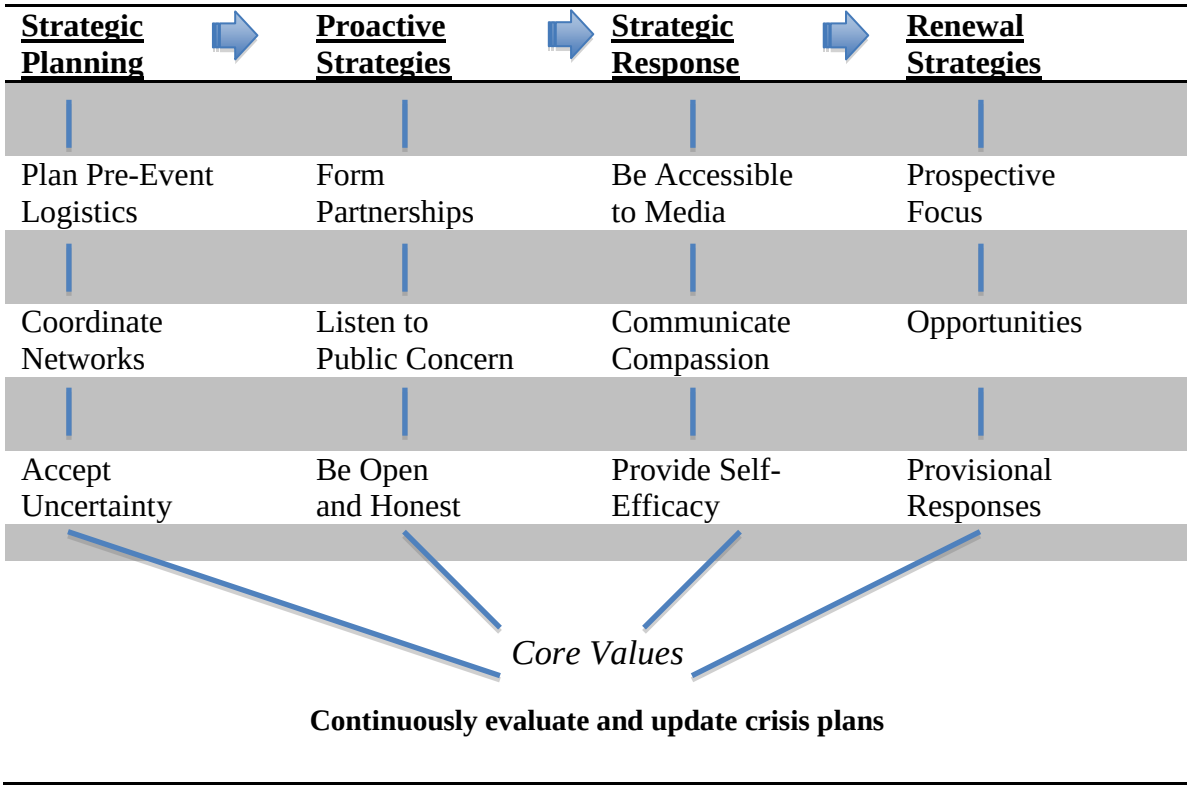


FIGURE 9
BEST PRACTICES IN RISK AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION FOR HBCUS

Seeger, though one of the originators of the discourse of renewal theory of post-crisis communication, did not include renewal strategy in this model. The researcher in this study

added a renewal component to this model (Figure 9). Additionally, the unique concerns and characteristics of HBCUs were applied throughout this generalized model. These concerns were not integrated into this model in a step-by-step, constraining manner that Seeger (2006) and Coombs (1999) warn against, but they instead provide principles HBCUs can apply regardless of specific institutional characteristics or crisis type. This model does provide certain generally applicable strategies and tactics that can be utilized by all Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Seeger (2006) said that following a crisis communication process model is "more comprehensive and systematic in addressing the entire range of strategies" (p. 237).

Strategic and Pre-Event Planning

HBCUs must first make sure to organize a functioning public relations unit for the university. If no public relations staff exists, an office should be created immediately. As many HBCUs function with small communication staffs, a few individuals can be hired and trained to manage the everyday public, community, media, and internal relations needs of the university. Once the basic public relations function is set, then crisis communication planning can begin.

In crisis communication planning, a formal and written detailed crisis communication plan MUST be developed. Ideally this plan should be a component of a larger campus overall crisis management plan. The crisis communication plan needs to clearly outline who within the university will serve as spokesperson and the proper chain of command and information delivery. Any necessary communications tools such as telephone numbers, email addresses, user names, and passwords should be written into the plan. How and when to use these tools and who will use them during a crisis should be clearly described. The person in charge of university communications must have direct and immediate access to university leadership and should also have decision-making authority. The communication manager must be experienced in public

relations practice and at a minimum be knowledgeable about crisis communication best practices. The manager needs to use this knowledge and experience as a contributing member of the dominant coalition. A backup spokesperson should also be selected and listed in this plan so that it is clear who is responsible for crisis communication efforts in the absence of the designated communication manager. Texas Southern University, for instance, did not have a such backup in place and suffered intense media scrutiny as a result. This responsibility should be written in the crisis communication plan along with components outlining what to do in case of an internal or an external crisis and worst case scenario planning. The worst case scenario can be determined by conducting a risk assessment. This process involves identifying potential environmental and reputational hazards to the university and developing a plan to prevent or combat them (Seeger, 2006).

Seeger (2006) cited expert panel results and said that communication managers need to be "fully integrated" into the decision-making process during this crisis planning or "policy development" stage (p. 236). He said that if the communication function is only considered after a crisis strikes, then the effects of crisis communication strategies and tactics are reduced. The researcher recommends that the Hampton University dominant coalition, for instance, allow Milligan to play a primary role, while continuing to exemplify innovative acts of stewardship. Also, crisis communication is more likely to be labeled as spin if it is only applied after the fact. Coombs (2007) recommended pre-writing crisis response messages as part of the planning process. Thus, should a crisis occur the practitioner could simply add details to the predesigned templates. He recommended that communication managers work with the organization's legal department to craft such messages.

Communication managers must offer their expertise as members of the dominant coalition in terms of messaging, strategies, tactics, and communication tools.

Up-to-date technology use and innovation are required tools for constructing this crisis communication plan. The plan should explain how and when to use items such as social media websites and emergency text messaging services. This should include a description of the proper communications mix using traditional and new media innovations; and, backup plans in case of technological failures. This component of the plan should also address the location and the physical and technological set-up of an offsite emergency operations center, should one become necessary.

Once the plan is written, the university must develop and implement a means for distribution of the plan throughout the university community. This includes hosting regular training sessions or other method of gaining institution-wide understanding, respect and support for the plan. It is crucial that all members of the university community are considered in the plan and know how to readily access and implement the plan as necessary. Last, developing a crisis communications plan is a multi-faceted process and it is not a one-time activity. This plan must be continuously updated as technologies develop and leadership or key players change within the university. Frequent review and revision is highly recommended.

Coordinate Networks

Seeger (2006) recommended engaging in strategic partnerships before a crisis occurs. These partnerships should provide the university with a base of credible sources, including faculty and business subject experts. Xavier University of Louisiana demonstrated exceptional use of partnerships in its crisis recovery and renewal efforts. Xavier's extensive provisional messaging, discussed below, led to greater than ever alumni and community financial donations

including the unsolicited donation from the country of Qatar that allowed the university to construct a new pharmacy building. In addition to financial support the school also utilized unwritten, but pre-organized media partnerships to achieve national praise for its ambitious renewal.

Networking and utilizing partnerships are import strategies throughout the stages of crisis. Strategic partnerships also include the coordination of all responsible university units and stakeholders in the pre-crisis phase. External stakeholders such as first responders need to be included along with internal stakeholders such as faculty and students in order to enhance the "probability of consistent messages and…reduce confusion" during a time of crisis (Seeger, 2006, p. 240).

Build a Professional Alliance

In addition to coordinating partnerships to ensure cohesive crisis messaging and management and prepare expert credible sources, it is important, especially for HBCU communicators, to build professional alliances. There are several organizations such as the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) that all university public relations practitioners can join. There is even the National Black Public Relations Society and the Black College Communication Association. However, none of these organizations directly serve the needs of HBCU public relations professionals. For starters, the National Black Public Relations Society would not be the proper venue because all HBCU practitioners are not black. Similarly, the Black College Communication Association focuses on strengthening communication academic programs at HBCUs. This best practice calls for a separate association or alliance where HBCU public relations directors and staff could share their unique challenges and gain peer support, networking opportunities, and most importantly--best practices. This alliance could be started at

little to no cost as a social media group where practitioners who choose to participate could have one designated place to share practical advice. If and when this organization grew past the point of an online network, HBCU communication professionals could petition their universities to assist with potential membership and conference fees. This type of network or sub-group can actually function as a unit of one of the mainstream public relations organizations. This is not an effort to segregate HBCU public relations professionals, as their active participation in the mainstream professional organizations is highly recommended. Instead, this is a call for the creation of a repository of documents and experience that these professionals can use to enhance their job performance, their respective universities, and HBCUs overall.

Accept Uncertainty

"Crises and disasters are, by definition, abnormal, dynamic, and unpredictable events" (Seeger, 2006, p. 241). Public relations practitioners, however, have a tendency to be overly reassuring during these times of uncertainty. Seeger (2006) said attempting to be too certain during the inherent uncertainty of a crisis situation can limit the credibility of the spokesperson.

Quick and Dynamic Action

Universities, in a crisis situation, do not have the luxury of delayed responses. This practice may work in day-to-day public relations activities, but the very nature of a crisis calls for immediate action. When a crisis is discovered, the proper parties must immediately assess the damage, potential damage or threat and act to contain the situation as much as possible. Then, the appropriate publics must be addressed in as much detail as possible. As mentioned, is not recommended the spokesperson be overly assuring or release incomplete or incorrect information in effort to respond quickly. A quick yet strategic response is ideal. Each public must be determined and crisis communications responses to these publics must be tailored. Different publics may require unique communications such as empathy, disciplinary tone and

technical terminology. The needs of each public must be addressed accordingly and they must be presented information in a dynamic and authoritative manner. At HBCUs, communication managers must make sure all members of the dominant coalition and crisis team, many who are more than willing to provide an "official" response, are informed and prepared to present a unified and accurate message in adequate time.

Proactive Strategies

The immediacy of a crisis requires not only quick and dynamic action, but also proactivity. As the discourse of renewal states, a reactive focus does not help an organization move beyond a crisis in a positive way. The tumultuous history of HBCUs and the common modern day challenges experienced by these institutions requires the use of proactive strategies, before during, and after a crisis occurs. HBCUs must maintain a continuous focus on institutional stability and longevity.

Form Partnerships

Partnering and engaging in stewardship efforts with the public is essential in all public relations efforts, but even more so in HBCU crisis communication. The HBCU community is one of a tightly knit nature and working with community, civic, and religious organizations is a key tool for building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships and institutional longevity. The public should serve as a resource instead of a burden in crisis management. The public and stakeholders not only have a desire, but also a right to know what is happening during a crisis. HBCUs must act in a socially responsible manner and keep the public informed about ongoing crisis communication and recovery efforts. This "dialogic approach to crisis communication" is emphasized as a best practice (Seeger, 2006, p. 238). In contrast, withholding information decreases the chances that publics will respond favorably.

For instance, if there is a life-threatening crisis at an HBCU there is likely to be greater expectation from parents that the university will take their children under its wing. This may involve faculty members taking personal responsibility to help evacuate and house students if necessary. Community buy-in is also especially important at schools like Texas Southern University where community members must be informed in all major decision-making. The results of this study showed that TSU community members are known to fiercely opposose university changes and decisions for which the community was not consulted. Town hall meeting can be held to help accomplish this goal, as was the case with TSU. HBCU communicators can also send press releases, public service announcements, attempt to earn local broadcast airtime, or use new or social media to inform the community and gain understanding and buy-in support.

Listen to Public Concern

Proactive communication involves not only disseminating information to the public or community, but engaging in two-way symmetrical communication. Hearing and understanding community concerns is again, especially important for HBCUs in terms of stewardship. "Establishing positive relationships and a reservoir of goodwill before an event is critical to the successful management of a crisis" (Seeger, 2006, p. 238). Building and maintaining relationships with various publics before a crisis increases credibility. Credibility is essential in effective crisis communication, but it is also a crucial factor for HBCUs. Because HBCUs must continuously prove the validity of their continued existence, message credibility and community support are not optional. Public opinion and sentiment should be measured on a regular basis. To gain an accurate and holistic picture of public perceptions, HBCUs can mail or email surveys to immediate and virtual community members as well as hold focus groups of six to eight individuals who represent different, but important publics of the institution. This information can

be used to gain greater understanding of the needs and wants of universities' publics. HBCUs can then address these needs and wants in implementing relationship-building efforts. In engaging in two-way communication with publics, HBCUs must converse in a manner that is open, honest, and transparent.

Be Open and Honest

> Honesty, candor, and openness may be conceptualized on a continuum. Honesty, in its most fundamental sense, is not lying. Candor refers to communicating the entire truth as it is known, even when the truth may reflect negatively on the agency or organization. A candid assessment might also include worse case scenarios and fear about how bad the crisis might become. Openness in crisis communication refers to a kind of accessibility and immediacy that goes beyond even a candid response. While few emergency managers would question the need to be honest, candor and openness are difficult to achieve in the high-uncertainty context of a crisis (Seeger, 2006, p. 239).

Transparency

In the case of HBCUs, there is less flexibility in terms of how much candor is required in crisis and post-crisis communication. HBCUs have to demonstrate every effort to prove credibility and thus these institutions must communicate in a spirit of full transparency when addressing publics, including media, in a time of crisis. Sincerity is also appreciated by publics thus building the level of trust between an organization and its publics. Transparency should be a common practice in everyday university communications, but being open and honest about the facts of a crisis is a necessity. All facts and details available that are pertinent to certain publics or media professionals should be shared as soon as they become available.

Strategic Response

HBCUs must communicate strategically. This means institutional goals and objectives must be considered in crisis and overall messaging. In a crisis situation, these strategic responses

must be driven from the core values that underlie the unique missions of HBCUs. The media are an essential resource in increasing awareness and support of these institutions.

Be Accessible to the Media

The media represent the greater public. Therefore, transparency and effective media relations are important strategies in improving the overall perception of HBCUs in times of crisis and otherwise. Universities must be certain to avoid conveying any inconsistent messaging and remember to engage in dialogic, two-way communication with media. HBCUs should also remember to engage and build relationships with minority-serving and minority-trusted media (Crouse Quinn, 2008). These outlets, more than mainstream media can help portray HBCUs as the valuable diverse institutions they are and were always intended to be.

Engage Media Professionals

HBCUs can host annual on campus media tours. This allows local media representatives to have personalized experience with their nearby HBCU. The Hampton University public relations team currently employs this strategy. Richardson (2007) conducted interviews of HBCU public relations practitioners and found that these professionals also favored such media tours as tools of gaining influence for their institutions. The media tours allow local education reporters and news directors to experience the campus firsthand. At Hampton, these tours are organized any time there is a major personnel change at a local outlet. Scheduling these media stewardship events takes persistent outreach to media professionals, but once the tours have been conducted the experience is mutually beneficial.

While this tactic is helpful to any organization, according to existing literature, HBCUs are often virtually invisible in the communities these campuses serve. Hosting a media day for each major local outlet allows public relations professionals and journalists to address concerns and goals face-to-face. This also provides journalists with a basic knowledge about their local

HBCU that will be helpful in their composing objective news reports and feature stories. It also provides public relations staff members the opportunity to meet their local media representatives and gain information that can improve the success rate of pitched story ideas. During the media day refreshments and a campus tour could be provided. Meetings with campus personnel of interest to the journalists can also be pre-arranged.

Communicate Compassion

Empathetic communication is another essential form of stewardship. Publics respond more favorably when a spokesperson demonstrates concern for his or her audience. Especially in times of crisis, this display of empathy must be genuine and believable to publics. HBCUs that often struggle with financial crises can employ this strategy when communicating with students. For instance, if student financial aid is adversely affected it is imperative that the university convey a meaningful level of understanding and concern. This will not resolve the crisis, but it may help to pacify angry students and build trust in the university as a good steward.

Engage and Empathize

This process is necessary for true discourse of renewal to take place. It will also help improve a university's image after a crisis. HBCUs should always aim to be good stewards not only within the "ivory tower" or campus community, but also in their respective surrounding communities. When recovering from a crisis, universities must not forget those publics who may not have been directly involved with the institutional crisis, but have ties emotionally or physically to the school. Communicating with these publics is crucial to overall renewal. Empathetic concern for the specific needs of these publics will go a long way in the ongoing development of a HBCU image. Thus, a truly successful discourse of renewal effort must include greater community stewardship.

Provide Self-Efficacy

Similarly, disseminating calming and informative messages during a crisis also helps to show concern for publics. Messages of self-efficacy help restore a sense of control in a crisis situation. These messages aim to invoke action from publics in order to endure a crisis situation.

> Messages of self-efficacy need to be constructed carefully so that the reason for the action is clear, so that they are consistent, and so that the recommended action is meaningful….The action should have both real and apparent utility in reducing the harm (Seeger, 2006, p. 242).

HBCUs operating under the discourse of renewal must convey messages of self-efficacy so that publics take the actions needed and desired to move the university forward. Safety precautions, for instance, are important messages to distribute in the midst of a crisis such as a campus shooting or natural disaster. Longer-term self-efficacy messages are also essential in engaging publics in acceptance of new policies and standards.

Renewal

As mentioned throughout this study, it is imperative HBCUs engage in the discourse of renewal. The universities featured in this project all demonstrated effective use of discourse of renewal strategies. Each university was exemplary in implementing at least one of the discourse of renewal factors.

Prospective Focus

Prospective focus, as noted, is an essential first-step to post-crisis renewal. Universities must proceed beyond a crisis with an eye on the future of the institution. This focus can lead to a range of minor to major university changes after a crisis. In order to emerge from certain crises, schools must reevaluate the entirety of university operations.

Texas Southern University demonstrated exemplary prospective focus. This university was plagued with a multi-faceted crisis including a student's murder and accreditation and

financial instability. In addition, the fact that the university had absolutely no public relations representation at the height of the crisis, during the unveiling of a massive president-led financial scandal made the situation even direr. In a crisis such as this one it would have been easy for those responsible for recovery to focus on blame for these past woes and dwell on the actions of the past. TSU however, did the opposite. John Rudley, current TSU president, led an impressive reorganization and renewal effort. Once appointed to the presidency by the State of Texas, Rudley immediately hired a highly experienced and highly motivated administrative team including a director of communications that had vested organizational memory and insight in TSU operations. Rudley and his team have since engaged not only in cleaning up the campus physically and safety-wise, but they have successfully implemented a more rigorous application process and curriculum. Rudley has also managed to help the university reach a place of financial and accreditation stability. All of these actions were completed in the midst of very public court cases settling issues related to past university mishaps. The forward-thinking focus required to achieve such a massive undertaking is significant and Texas Southern University has applied such focus beautifully.

Enlist Consultants Regularly

HBCUs are such tightly knit communities that they sometimes forget to enlist the help of "outsiders." In today's marketplace no organization can afford to live in a bubble. Some of the HBCUs in this study, TSU included, enlisted the help of private consultants to evaluate their crisis and post-crisis communication efforts. Directors were able to gain valuable insight into the message perception and reach they achieved. This demonstrated prospective focus because these schools showed, by reviewing and applying consultant results, that the institutions were willing and able to move past the crisis as a stronger entity. However, it is recommended that HBCUs not only employ consultants after a crisis, but on a regular basis, either semi-annually or

quarterly. This type of service can come at a cost, but HBCUs could receive invaluable information from consultant analysis. In recognizing these budget constraints, HBCUs with a graduate business program could enlist students to audit public relations data. Or, if a private firm or graduate auditor cannot be employed universities can use free online media mention and media hit analytic services. Either way, there should be some sort of regular outside audit that is applied to measure communication productivity and reach as well as the extent to which these universities are achieving organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the outside objective opinion from a consultant can provide the school with a clearer prospective focus and help these unique institutions to continuously survive and thrive by capitalizing on opportunities.

Formal Evaluation

Certain opportunities that arise from a time of crisis are obvious. However, the best way to for HBCUs to fully recognize and capitalize on opportunities is to engage in formal crisis communication evaluation measures. Once the emergency of the crisis has passed, universities should make sure to implement formal evaluation methods. This process can include hiring a consultant and/or conducting post-crisis research in-house. Communications staff and university administrators should determine, quantitatively, whether the crisis communication plan was followed and how well it was adhered to. Public and media perceptions should also be measured. This data can be gained via research methods such as focus groups, media content analysis and surveys. The results of such evaluation should be analyzed and filtered into the continuous development and updating of the existing crisis communication plan. This practice helps to avoid repeat crises, mistakes and mishaps.

Opportunities

Each university featured in this study seized opportunities that arose from the crises. Hampton University took the first on campus violent act of this type in over 30 years as an

opportunity to reevaluate campus safety and notification measures. As noted, Texas Southern University emerged from a near-crippling crisis by taking the opportunity to revamp the very being and presence of the university to ensure continued existence and success. Xavier University of Louisiana used the citywide devastating crisis of Hurricane Katrina and her aftermath to capitalize on the opportunity for increased fundraising and positive national recognition for the school's expeditious rebuilding and reopening.

Provisional Responses

Presidential vision and focus are important to the ability of HBCUs to thrive in times of crisis and otherwise. When a charismatic and visionary leader is present, this individual is able to rally support for crisis recovery or other university endeavors. In the spirit of the HBCU village, the dynamic HBCU president serves as a pseudo parental figure who oversees all of the family interactions in the university community.

Xavier University of Louisiana demonstrated exemplary provisional responses. Xavier President Dr. Norman Francis utilized his decades of experience, institutional knowledge, and faith to lead a near miraculous recovery after Hurricane Katrina. Francis decided in the days immediately following the storm that the university would reopen the following semester. Achieving such a massive rebuilding effort in this short timeframe, especially in a city that was not fully functional, presented significant challenges. Francis however, managed to convince and gain the support of his administrative staff including the associate vice president for university and media relations. Francis also quickly engaged the assistance of the larger Xavier community. Throughout the recovery process Francis made sure to emphasize messages that the school was coming back and that students and many faculty would be able to return to a sense of normalcy.

Core Values

Core values are the driving force behind HBCUs. These values are what make these institutions unique and vital in the African American community and beyond. All of the factors in this best practices model including the discourse of renewal factors serve to support the core values of HBCUs. Each strategy and tactic recommended promotes the overall strength and continued wellbeing of the HBCU village. Institutions that rely on these core values, especially in times of crisis renewal, help to present HBCUs in a positive light that shows the vitality, spirit, and necessity of these universities.

In the case of the shooting crisis, Hampton University relied on its core values to convey messages of renewal. Hampton is known for its "old-fashioned" values. Character building is a major component of university life. When a highly uncharacteristic shooting occurred on this waterfront, yacht-lined community of a campus, Hampton President William R. Harvey made sure to emphasize that this was a tragedy in the eyes of this university. Harvey emphasized the tragic nature of this incident although no one was killed. This was due to the fact that this situation shook the core of the notoriously safe campus. Hampton University's core values are also highlighted in this situation in that none of the victims nor the shooter were current students. A Hampton student, as evidenced by the 30 plus years of no such incident occurring on campus, respects the ideals of the university. Throughout the short and long term crisis recovery and renewal, Harvey was sure to stress that Hampton is a safe campus and that the home-like atmosphere was stable and protected at a level exceeding pre-crisis standards.

Conclusion

Implications

This study explores three Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the respective crises and renewal efforts experienced by each. The examination of these incidents and the university public relations strategies and tactics used to recover from the crises has provided insight into the complexities of HBCU institutional communication. The results of these case studies show that HBCUs are vibrant and highly resilient institutions. These institutions do face what can be viewed as daunting challenges, but they overcome obstacles on a daily basis. This fighting spirit is exemplary of the founding principles of these institutions that were born out of a climate of American racial and social injustice. Since the time of their founding Historically Black Colleges and Universities have served as responsible citizens of society as a whole, while maintaining adherence to the core values of these institutions. The unique mission of Historically Black Colleges and Universities is to educate black students and guide these individuals through a collegiate education and coming of age and bonding experience in order to provide productive citizens of the world. The merger of modern higher education with traditional African values all in a spirit of excellence is what makes Historically Black Colleges and Universities truly unique.

Limitations

As with any study, this project has certain limitations. First, the case study nature of this study only allows for in-depth examination of three specific institutions and incidents. Finding HBCU crisis situations that generated major media coverage is not difficult, especially if the crisis is of a financial nature. However, contacting and reaching participation agreements with public relations staff members at many HBCUs can present insurmountable challenges. The five interviews conducted represent a small portion of the sum of HBCU public relations employees,

but the interviewees in this study were not only eager to participate, they are seasoned professionals who offered valuable communication and journalistic insight. The results of this study, while situation specific, do shed light on HBCUs from the unique perspective of crisis renewal. Additionally, the documentation evidence examined in this study helped to reinforce the discourse of renewal categorizations of interview transcript data. As mentioned, though only three specific cases were examined in this case, key commonalities that can fuel future study emerged.

Directions for Future Research

Further study in this area could consist of the analysis of a wider range of HBCU crises and public relations staff using a quantitative or mixed method approach. The results of such a study could add to the dearth of HBCU public relations literature by presenting a comprehensive view of this unique niche in the communications industry. Additionally, more HBCU post-crisis case studies could be conducted in order to draw even greater similarities among these situations. A wealth of academic knowledge about Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the communication practices of these institutions is yet to be discovered.

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APPENDIX A
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

- What was the time frame for this campaign? When did the campaign come to an end?
- Which audiences were targeted for communication?
- Were certain audiences more of a priority than others? If so, why?
- Should other audiences have also been targeted?
- How were research data (if any) about each audience obtained?
- Were the data as complete as necessary?
- What are the research (crisis preparation) strengths and weaknesses of this case?

- Categorize this case's objectives.
- What is your overall assessment of the objectives used in this case?

- Evaluate the theme (if any) used in this case.
- What major message or messages are communicated in this case?
- What were the central actions or special events in this case?
- What were the types of uncontrolled and controlled media that were used?
- Were any forms of communication omitted that should have been used?
- Did you use any of the following communication principles such as source credibility, two-way communication, opinion leaders, and group influence?

- Describe any evaluative methods used.
- How appropriate and effective were these methods?
- Did the program achieve its stated objectives?
- Was there a real link between the case's objectives and its evaluation?

- As a whole, how effective was this public relations program?
- What are its major strengths? Major weaknesses? Explain.
- What, if anything, would you do differently if you experienced another crisis like or similar to this one?
- Do you consider this case a success?

- Did you have a crisis communication plan prior to this crisis? If so, was the plan used? Was it the first thing you turned to?
- Briefly describe the chain of events in this situation.
- What is your opinion of the media (on a regular basis and during this situation) – do you consider them a partner or a hindrance, etc.?

- How long have you worked in this position?
- What is your background in PR/journalism? (education/work experience)

- What is the makeup of your public relations office?
- What are the regular activities and publications implemented by your office?
- Do you consider public relations a management function at your institution?
- Do you feel that university leadership requests and respects your opinion regarding communications issues?
- Have you been successful in recommending/implementing communications activities to administration?

- Are there any details you'd like to ask that we haven't discussed?

APPENDIX B
CONTINGENCY FACTORS
(Pang et. al., 2010, pp. 544-546)

Internal Variables

Organization Characteristics

- Open or closed culture
- Dispersed widely geographically or centralized
- Level of technology the organization uses to produce its product or service
- Homogeneity or heterogeneity of officials involved
- Age of the organization/value placed on tradition
- Speed of growth in the knowledge level the organization uses
- Economic stability of the organization
- Existence or non-existence of issues management officials or program
- Organization's past experiences with the public
- Distribution of decision making power
- Formalization: number of roles or codes defining and limiting the job
- Stratification/hierarchy or positions
- Existence or influence of legal department
- Business exposure
- Corporate culture

Public Relations Department Characteristics

- Number of practitioners total and number of college degrees
- Type of past training: trained in PR or ex-journalists, marketing, etc.
- Location of PR department in hierarchy: independent or under marketing umbrella/experiencing encroachment of marketing/persuasive mentality
- Representation is the dominant coalition
- Experience level of PR practitioners in dealing with crisis
- General communication competency of department
- Autonomy of department
- Physical placement of department in building (near CEO and other decision makers or not)
- Staff trained in research methods
- Amount of funding available for dealing with external publics
- Amount of time allowed to use dealing with external publics
- Gender: percentage of female upper-level staff/managers
- Potential of department to practice various models of public relations

Characteristics of Dominant Coalition (Top Management)

- Political values: conservative or liberal/open or closed to change
- Management style: domineering or laid-back
- General altruism level
- Support and understanding of PR
- Frequency of external contact with publics

- Departmental perception of the organization's external environment
- Calculation of potential rewards or losses using different strategies with external publics
- Degree of line manager involvement in external affairs

Internal Threats (How Much is at Stake in the Situation)

- Economic loss or gain from implementing various stances
- Marring of employees' or stockholders' perceptions of the company
- Marring of the personal reputations of the company decision makers

Individual Characteristics (Public Relations Practitioners, Domestic Coalition, and Line Managers)

- Training in diplomacy, marketing, journalism, engineering, etc.
- Personal ethics
- Tolerance or ability to deal with uncertainty
- Comfort level with conflict or dissonance
- Comfort level with change
- Ability to recognize potential and existing problems
- Extent to openness to innovation
- Extent to which individual can grasp other's worldview
- Personality: dogmatic, authoritarian
- Communication competency
- Cognitive complexity: ability to handle complex problems
- Predisposition toward negotiations
- Predisposition toward altruism
- How individuals receive, process, and use information and influence
- Familiarity with external public or its representative
- Like external public or representative
- Gender: female versus male

Relationship Characteristics

- Level of trust between organization and external public
- Dependency of parties involved
- Ideological barriers between organization and public

External Variables

Threats

- Litigation
- Government regulation
- Potentially damaging publicity
- Scarring of company's reputation in business community and in the general public
- Legitimizing activists' claims

Industry Environment

- Changing (dynamic) or static
- Number of competitors/level of competition
- Richness or leanness of resources in the environment

General political/Social Environment/External Culture

- Degree of political support or business
- Degree of social support of business

The External Public (Group, Individual, etc.)

- Size and/or number of members
- Degree of source credibility/powerful members or connections
- Past successes or failures of groups to evoke change
- Amount of advocacy practiced by the organization
- Level of commitment/involvement of members
- Whether the group has public relations counselors or not
- Public's perception of group: reasonable or radical
- Level of media coverage the public has received in past
- Whether representatives of the public know or like representatives of the organization
- Whether representatives of the organization know or like representatives from the public
- Public's willingness to dilute its cause/request/claim
- Moves and countermoves
- Relative power of organization
- Relative power of public

Issue Under Question

- Size
- Stake
- Complexity

APPENDIX C
IRB APPROVAL

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair
131 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.6792
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/irb

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

– Applicant,Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-E, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee. Members of this committee can be found at http://www.lsu.edu/screeningmembers.shtml

– A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:
(A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of part B thru E.
(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1&2)
(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.
*If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.
(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (http://phrp.nihtaining.com/users/login.php.)
(F) IRB Security of Data Agreement: (http://www.lsu.edu/irb/IRB%20Security%20of%20Data.pdf)

1) Principal Investigator: Erica C. Taylor **Rank:** Graduate Student

Dept: Mass Communication **Ph:** 225-578-7095 **E-mail:** etayl19@lsu.edu

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each

IRB# E5231 LSU Proposal #

⊗ Complete Application

⊗ Human Subjects Training

3) Project Title: Crisis Communication Practices at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Study Exempted By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Exemption Expires: 11-22-2013

4) Proposal? (yes or no) No **If Yes, LSU Proposal Number**

Also, if YES, either ◯ **This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant**

OR ◯ **More IRB Applications will be filed later**

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students) University public relations directors and staff members

*Circle any **"vulnerable populations" to be used:** (children <18; the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the ages, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature [signature] **Date** September 29, 2010 (no per signatures)

** **I certify my responses are accurate and complete.** If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Screening Committee Action: Exempted √ Not Exempted ____ Category/Paragraph 2

Reviewer Mathews **Signature** [signature] **Date** 11/23/10

APPENDIX D
DOCUMENTATION EVIDENCE

Hampton University Documents

Office of University Relations
HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Office of University Relations
Hampton University
Hampton, VA 23668
(757) 727-5253

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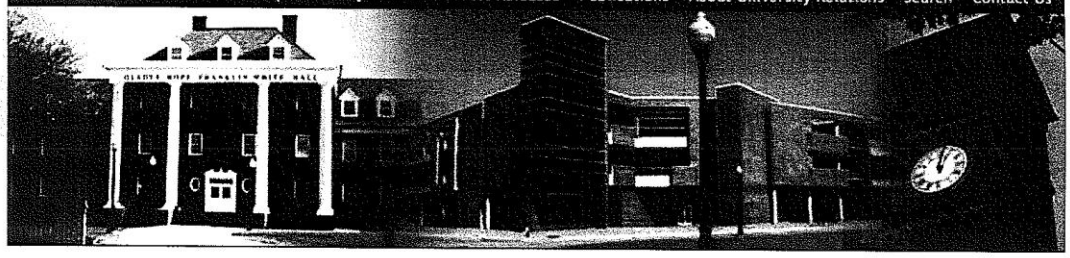

2008-2009 Press Releases Press Release Archives April 26, 2009 - #59

Hampton University Statement on Shooting

Hampton, VA - There was a shooting incident on the campus of Hampton University at approximately 1 a.m. today. No current students were involved and or injured. The Hampton City Police believe that they have the shooter in custody. A former student, currently residing in New York, allegedly shot a pizza delivery driver and the night manager at Harkness Hall. He then allegedly turned the gun on himself. All three were airlifted to area hospitals. Following university policy, students, faculty and staff were notified via text message and email about the situation. Hampton City police are on the scene and investigating the incident.

Hampton University chapel services and classes will proceed as scheduled. **The University will hold a press conference at 4 p.m. in Armstrong Stadium.**

HU

For more information contact University Relations @ 757.727.5253.

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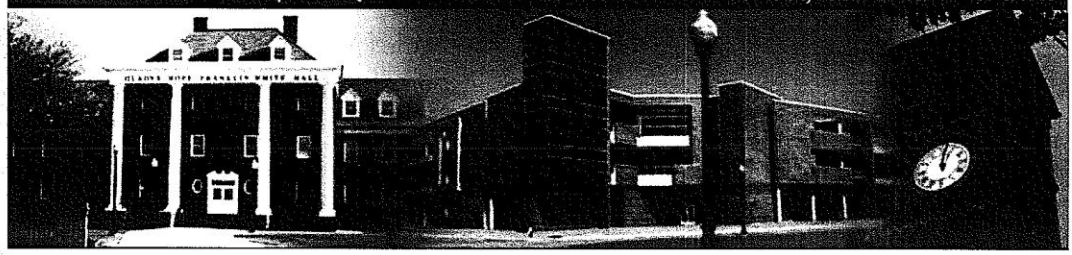

2008-2009 Press Releases

Press Release Archives

April 28, 2009 - #60

HU Campus Community Comes Together After Shooting Incident

Hampton, VA -Hampton University President Dr. William R. Harvey met with faculty and staff yesterday to discuss the latest developments on the shooting incident on campus on April 26. Harvey recounted the details of the incident and the status of the victims.

"We are grateful there was no loss of life and no students were involved in any way," said Harvey. "We pray for all those who were shot and the one who allegedly did the shooting." The night manager of Harkness Hall has been released from the hospital and the two other victims are in stable condition.

Harvey praised the first responders to the scene, including the Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel. He said that without swift, professional, and effective responses, there could have been a much larger tragedy.

Harvey encouraged attendees to make sure door locks and swipe systems are working properly in their buildings throughout campus and to swiftly report any malfunctions.

Letters to the parents of Hampton University students with information about the incident and security measures on campus were mailed yesterday. A meeting with students was held yesterday at 5 p.m. Students also held a support rally for residents of Harkness Hall. Also the Office of Student Activities is holding a sign-up drive for the emergency messaging system today through Friday, May 1 from noon – 2 p.m. in the Student Center Cyber Lounge.

 # HU #

For more information contact Yuri Rodgers Milligan @ 757.727.5253 or email yuri.milligan@hamptonu.edu.

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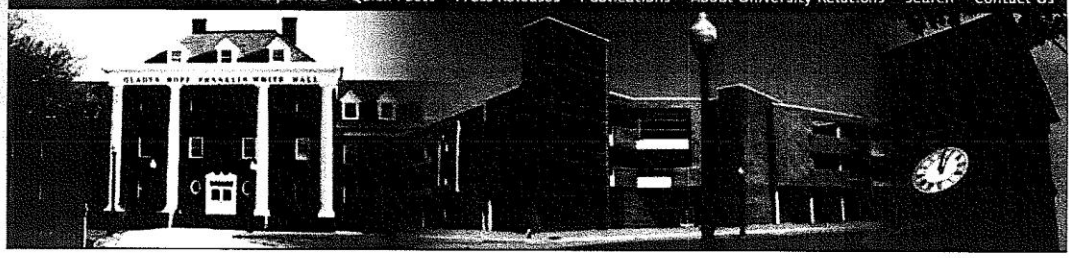


2008-2009 Press Releases

Press Release Archives

April 29, 2009 - #61

HU President William R. Harvey Releases Statement to Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As you may be aware, there was a shooting incident on the campus of Hampton University at approximately 1 a.m. on Sunday, April 26, 2009. No current students were involved and/ or injured and fortunately, there were no fatalities. A former student, currently residing in New York, allegedly shot a pizza delivery driver and the night manager in Harkness Hall. He then allegedly turned the gun on himself. All three were airlifted to area hospitals. Hampton City Police are investigating the incident, and the Hampton University community is praying for those injured.

When I arrived at the scene approximately 15 minutes after the shooting, the campus was on lockdown, the crime scene had been secured and Harkness Hall had been evacuated. Text messages were sent, a telephone message was left on campus telephones including dormitories and offices, and information about the situation was placed on the web site until 2:57 a.m. I actually remained on the scene until 5:00 a.m. and spoke to a number of students to make sure that they are aware of the services available to them on campus, including counseling.

Please be assured that the Hampton University continues to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our campus. There is no greater priority for us than the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. We are working hand-in-hand with law enforcement authorities to confirm exactly what happened and why. All of the first responders including, Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University Police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel, handled the shooting on campus in a swift, professional, and effective manner. They are real heroes. I commend them for immediately handling what quite possibly could have been an even more tragic situation.

In addition to the sessions that I conducted on the morning of the shooting, we have had at least two other sessions with students and one session with faculty and staff. I wanted this communication to come to you so that you would be the beneficiary of the latest information available to me.

With all good wishes,

William R. Harvey
President

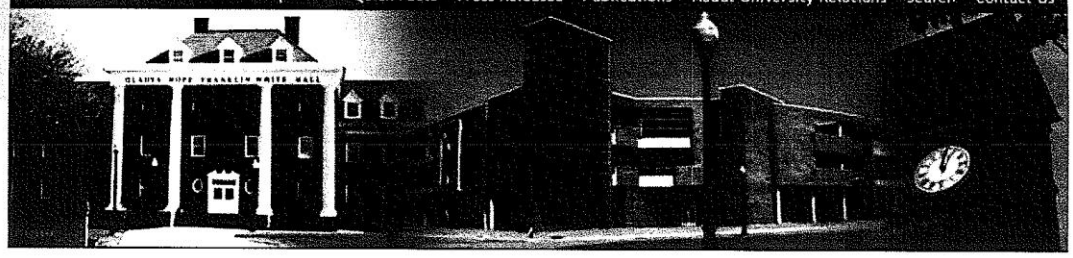
 # HU #

For more information contact Yuri Rodgers Milligan @ 757.727.5253 or email yuri.milligan@hamptonu.edu.

Return To 2008 - 2009 Press Releases

Emancipation Oak

Office of University Relations
Hampton University
Hampton, VA 23668
(757) 727-5253



2008-2009 Press Releases

Press Release Archives

May 1, 2009 - #62

HU Establishes Support Fund for Injured Victims

President William R. Harvey announced today that Hampton University has established a support fund for the two injured victims of the shooting incident in Harkness Hall on April 26. The HU Victims Support Fund will benefit the families of the night monitor of Harkness Hall and a pizza delivery driver, both injured during the incident.

To make an online donation visit http://www.hamptonu.edu/supportfund. Donations will also be accepted in the form of cash, check or money order and may be delivered or mailed to the Office of Development, 104 Wigwam Building, Hampton University, Hampton, Va. 23668. Please make checks and money orders payable to the HU Victims Support Fund.

For more information contact Evelyn Oakley at 757-727-5012.

 # HU #

For more information contact Yuri Rodgers Milligan @ 757.727.5253 or email yuri.milligan@hamptonu.edu.

Return To 2008 - 2009 Press Releases'

Emancipation Oak

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Web Site Design By Hampton Roads Web Sites

Hosted by Google Search News

3 Va. men hurt in shooting at Hampton University

9 hours ago

HAMPTON, Va. (AP) — Officials say three men are hospitalized after an overnight shooting in a dormitory at Hampton University in Virginia.

Police say the suspect is an 18-year-old Richmond man who shot a 62-year-old Hampton man and a 43-year-old Hampton man and then turned the gun on himself. No students were injured.

School spokeswoman Yuri Rodgers Milligan says that police believe the shooter is a former student, and that one victim is the night manager of Harkness Hall.

Officials do not know the motive for the shooting, reported around 1 a.m.

All students, faculty and staff were notified about the situation via text message and e-mail.

The school remained on lockdown Sunday morning while police investigated.

Hampton University is a private school with about 5,700 students.

On the Net:

- http://www.hamptonu.edu
- http://www.hamptonu.edu

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Associated Press

Map

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The Virginian-Pilot
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3 WOUNDED IN SHOOTING AT HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Suspect, a former student, is arrested

INSIDE Three people are killed in a rash of violence in Norfolk. **Hampton Roads**

ONLINE Read a statement from Hampton University at PilotOnline.com.

By Patrick Wilson
The Virginian-Pilot

HAMPTON

A former Hampton University student armed with three loaded handguns shot a dorm manager and a pizza delivery driver inside a school dorm early Sunday before turning the gun on himself, officials said.

All three survived, and a suspect was quickly arrested. A motive for the shooting was not clear.

The dorm manager, who was shot three times, had been released from a hospital on Sunday. The delivery driver and the suspect, age 18, remained in a hospital in stable condition, university officials said.

No students were injured in the shooting at Harkness Hall, an all-male dorm, which happened around 1 a.m., Hampton police said.

Hampton University President William R. Harvey

See **HAMPTON, PAGE 7**

HAMPTON | *Shooter followed delivery man into dorm*

Continued from Page 1

and campus police Chief Leroy Crosby met with reporters and students on campus Sunday afternoon to answer questions.

Harvey said he arrived about 15 minutes after the shooting to find the campus on lockdown, the dorm evacuated and the suspect in custody.

"This is a tragedy, and we are fortunate and blessed that no student was involved," Harvey said. "The Hampton University community is praying for those injured in this tragic incident."

Crosby said the shooter, who had been visiting his brother in Norfolk, parked a vehicle off campus and walked onto campus, walking behind the pizza delivery driver into the dorm after the doors were opened for the driver.

Harvey spoke with the dorm manager after he was released from the hospital.

When he heard gunfire, Harvey said, the manager pulled a fire alarm, prompting students to evacuate.

"What he wanted to do was to immediately evacuate, which was the right thing to do," Harvey said.

According to Harvey, the dorm manager heard gunfire, got up from his desk, and the pizza delivery driver "half fell" into the manager's office.

"That's when the gunman came around the door and aimed the gun at him," Harvey said.

As the gunman fired, the dorm manager raised his hands and was shot three times – once in each arm and once in a leg.

The gunman shot himself by the time campus police arrived on the scene, Crosby said. He did not try to rob the delivery driver, he said.

The shooter's mother lives in New York and his father lives in Richmond, university officials said. A statement from the university said the gunman had been living in New York; Hampton police identified him as being from Richmond.

The shooter lived in Harkness Hall when he was a Hampton student for several years, Harvey said.

Harvey met with students at various times on Sunday, praised efforts of first responders, and said the university would release as much information as it could to the public about the shooting.

University officials held a closed meeting for students Sunday to answer their questions. About 220 students live in Harkness Hall, but several students said campus was quiet early Sunday because it was a warm weekend and many students were out.

A meeting for students will be held at 5 p.m. today in Ogden Hall.

Jelani Holland, 18, a freshman from Los Angeles, said he and other students were playing music and video games in the dorm when they heard a fire alarm about 12:30 a.m., The Associated Press reported. As they left their rooms, they saw the delivery man shot in the neck and stomach outside the night manager's office. Police were applying pressure to his wounds, he said.

"He was shaking a lot and talking with police," Holland told The AP.

Harvey said telephone messages were sent out to the campus immediately after the shooting, but text messages did not go to students until about 3 a.m.

Text messages are sent only to students who signed up to receive such alerts, he said.

The university will review that policy as it looks into the incident, he said.

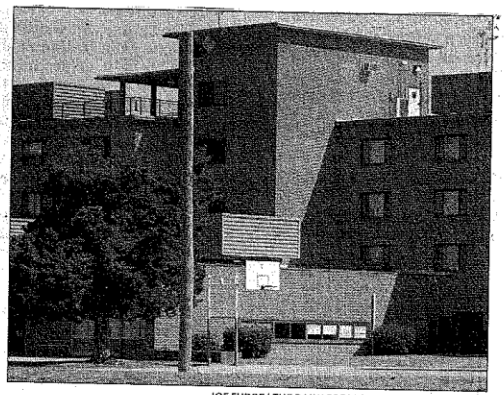
Students said they were shaken by what happened, and some who signed up for text alerts said they never got the alert.

Kristen Douthit, a sophomore from New York, said she questioned a security system that allowed an armed man to get inside a dorm. Had he not shot himself, she said, the situation could have been worse.

"If you went on a spree ... a lot of people could have been very hurt," she said. "I know that parents are worried and students are really upset."

Harvey said the school would be reviewing campus security, including the ability of someone to walk onto campus unrestricted.

"There is no greater pri-



JOE FUDGE | THE DAILY PRESS | THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hampton University President William R. Harvey said that in his 31 years as school president, there had never been a shooting like Sunday's at Harkness Hall, pictured above.

MONDAY
APRIL 27, 2009
Daily Press
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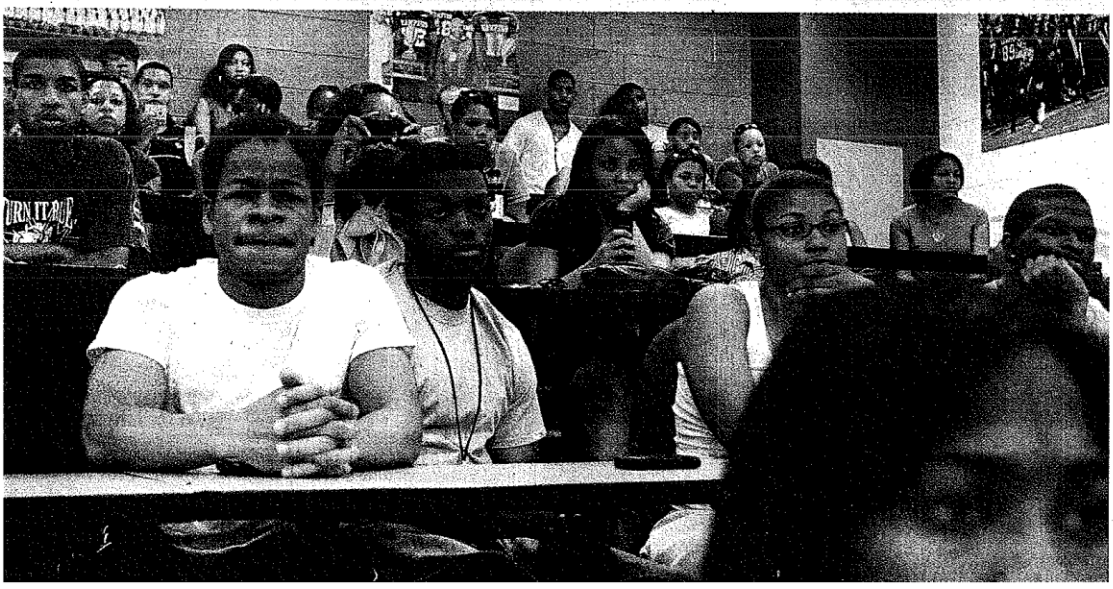
HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Shooting alert draws scrutiny

Officials sent e-mail, phone, text alerts 2 hours after 3 people were shot Sunday but some say more should have been done



Shootings

Continued from 1

The first alert — sent by text message, e-mail and an automated message to dorm phones — was sent at 3 a.m., Harvey said during a Sunday afternoon press conference.

The victims and gunman were airlifted to area hospitals and were listed in stable condition. The night monitor has been released from the hospital, Harvey said. None of those wounded are current students.

Harvey repeatedly praised police and emergency responders for their professionalism and swift action, which he credited with avoiding more carnage and preventing deaths. He also touted the university's security, saying he believed it to be "one of the safest campuses anywhere."

"The fact that they responded so quickly, so effectively, so professionally may well have avoided further tragedy," he said. "This is a tragedy. We are fortunate that no students were involved. ... I continue to believe that Hampton University is one of the safest campuses anywhere."

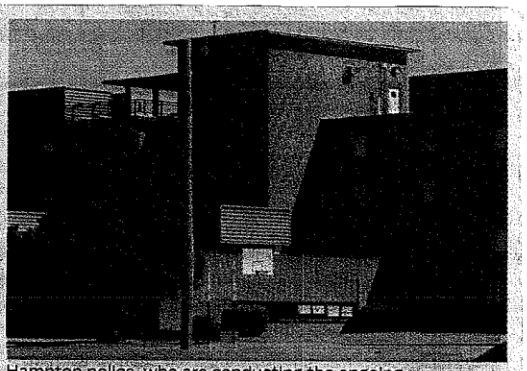
The shooting occurred in the lobby of Harkness Hall, a brick, all-male dorm on Huntington Road. That's near the southwest corner of the HU campus, northeast of James Creek and adjacent to an on-campus steam plant.

The suspect parked his car at Hampton Harbors, a nearby off-campus apartment complex, then walked onto campus, HU Police Chief Leroy said during the press conference. The campus is accessible by car through only one guarded gate, something the suspect likely would have known as a former student, said Harvey.

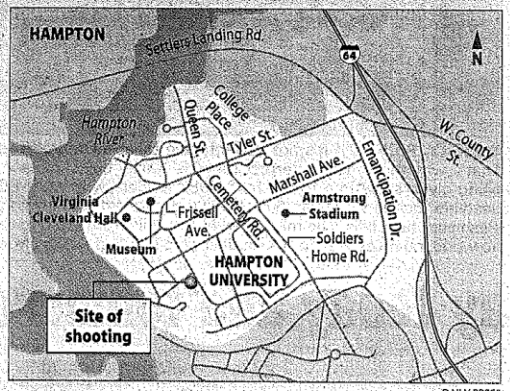
Crosby said the suspect followed the pizza delivery man into the dorm, then shot him. The delivery man fell into the night monitor's office, and the gun was then turned on the monitor, said Harvey. The night monitor threw his arms up in self-defense and took one bullet to each of his arms and one to the leg, Harvey said. The gunman then allegedly turned the gun on himself.

The campus was immediately locked down, said Crosby. The dorm's fire alarm was activated and the building evacuated. Some students exiting the dorm passed the victims on the way out, Crosby said.

Harvey, who lives on campus, arrived at the scene shortly after the shooting occurred, he said. Because he was on scene and knew the suspected shooter was in custody, Harvey said he made



Hampton police, who are conducting the ongoing investigation, have not suggested a motive for Sunday morning's shootings at Harkness Hall.



DAILY PRESS

Shooting suspect lived in Harkness Hall as a student

By Dan Parsons
dparsons@dailypress.com | 247-7840

HAMPTON — The former Hampton University student accused of shooting two people Sunday morning in the lobby of an on-campus dormitory used to live in the building, according to university officials.

From September until November 2008, the 18-year-old freshman lived in Harkness Hall, an all-male dorm near the southwest corner of campus, according to HU President William R. Harvey. In mid-November the student voluntarily withdrew from the university, Harvey said at a Sunday afternoon press conference held to inform the public and students about the 1 a.m. shooting.

The former student, who lives in New York where his mother also lives, was visiting a brother in Norfolk, Harvey said. The student's father lives in Richmond, he said. The former student drove his brother's car to Hampton, according to HU Police Chief Leroy Crosby.

at an off-campus Burger King about 1 a.m. but was not alerted and would not have known of any possible danger. Both said campus police could do better at pa-

the school but did not receive one.

Jeter, 18, who lives in a dorm next to Harkness Hall, said at first she thought the commotion was a fire drill. She then learned of the

"The fact that they responded so quickly, so effectively, so professionally may well have avoided further tragedy. This is a tragedy. We are fortunate that no students were involved."

— William R. Harvey, Hampton University president

JOE FUDGE/DAILY PRESS PHOTOS

Hampton University President William R. Harvey shows how Harkness Hall's night manager held his arms to shield himself from the gunman.

HU defends response to dorm shootin

Officials waited 2 hours to send warnings to make sure area was safe and message was accurate, president says

By Matthew Sturdevant
msturdevant@dailypress.com | 247-7874

HAMPTON — Hampton University President William R. Harvey on Monday defended the university's response to a gunman who walked onto campus early Sunday, shot a pizza deliveryman and a dormitory monitor before shooting himself.

The university sent a text message about 3 a.m., approximately two hours after the incident, to about 1,600 students who voluntarily signed up for the university's text message service.

In addition, all students, faculty and staff were sent an e-mail and/or voice message on dormitory phones, said Director of University Relations Yuri Rodgers Milligan.

The message said: "There has been a shooting at Harkness Hall. The suspect has been apprehended and the campus is safe."

Rodgers Milligan said university officials are encouraging students to sign up for the voluntary text message service from noon to 2 p.m. today through Friday at a cyber cafe in the student center.

Harvey said university officials are going to look at every aspect of the school's emergency response system.

One consideration could be to make the emergency text message service mandatory for students, although receiving text messages is an additional cost to students, Harvey said.

See RESPONSE/Page 5

How to stay info

In the wake of Sunday
ings, Hampton Univer
cials are considering
the text message war
service mandatory.
For now, students can
for the voluntary text
service from noon to
today through Friday
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Response

Continued from 1

University Police Chief Leroy Crosby said if the gunman had been on the loose, a text message warning students "would have gone out immediately." Instead, the dorm lobby where shots were fired had been contained, and the suspect was in custody shortly after the shootings, Crosby said.

Harvey said Crosby's decision to wait before sending an emergency text message to students was based on three factors: making sure the area was safe, making sure the situation was under control and guaranteeing the message was accurate.

During a meeting with faculty and support staff, Harvey said it is easy to be a Monday morning quarterback regarding the university's response. He said the heroes of the day were the first responders: university police, Hampton police, and fire and rescue personnel.

Those first responders might have prevented more "carnage," Harvey said.

"Who knows what he was going to do," Harvey said of the gunman.

The gunman was an 18-year-old former freshman who voluntarily withdrew from classes on Nov. 14, after about 2½ months of classes, Harvey said. After dropping out, the gunman went to New York City to live with his mother, Harvey said.

HU Police Chief Leroy Crosby said if the gunman had been on the loose, a text message warning students "would have gone out immediately."

His father lives in Richmond, and the gunman has a brother in Norfolk, whom he was visiting before the shootings, Harvey said.

The gunman parked at a nearby off-campus apartment complex, Hampton Harbor, and walked onto university grounds armed with three handguns — a .357-caliber revolver, a .44-caliber revolver and a .25-caliber pistol.

About 1 a.m., the gunman followed a pizza deliveryman into a dormitory that houses about 220 students, university officials said.

Neither university officials nor Hampton police have released a timeline of what happened next, but some new details were disclosed Monday.

The gunman shot the 43-year-old pizza delivery driver, who fell into the front-desk office where a 62-year-old night watchman, or dorm monitor, was sitting, Harvey said, being careful to use the word "allegedly" when referring to the suspect's actions.

The gunman then aimed at the dorm monitor, who held his arms up to defend himself, Harvey said. The gunman allegedly shot the dorm monitor twice in the arms and, as he was falling to the floor, shot him in the leg, Harvey said.

The dorm monitor was released from the hospital, and Harvey had a chance to speak with him.

"His spirits were good," Harvey said. "He said, 'The Lord has blessed me.' "

Neither university officials nor police would release identities of the shooter or those who were shot.

Hampton police spokeswoman Cpl. Paula Ensley said charges are pending against the shooter, who was still hospitalized Monday.

The pizza delivery driver was also hospitalized, Ensley said.

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY SHOOTING | CLASSES RESUME

'I thank God that there was no loss of life'

Students, staff move ahead after incident that left three wounded

By Denise Watson Batts
The Virginian-Pilot

Hampton University was back to normal Monday, a day after a gunman slipped into a men's dormitory Sunday morning and shot two people and then himself.

The dorm's night manager, one of the victims, has been released from the hospital after being treated for gunshots to each arm and a leg, Hampton President William Harvey said during a news conference Monday afternoon.

The second victim, a pizza delivery driver, remained at Riverside Regional Medical Center in Newport News, and the alleged shooter was taken to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, Harvey said.

Both were listed in stable condition, he said.

"I am so pleased, and I thank God that there was no loss of life," Harvey said to a round of applause from the crowd of support staff and faculty that filled Ogden Hall. "And we are praying for all of the victims, all those shot and the one who allegedly did the shooting."

Harvey thanked the campus and city police, fire department, student affairs staff and others who he said were on scene within 15 minutes of the Harkness Hall shooting, which occurred about 1 a.m.

"I believe they prevented a lot of carnage."

Harvey gave a brief timeline of the incident, correcting some information that had previously been released.

The unidentified suspect is a former Hampton student who went to campus armed with three loaded guns and plenty

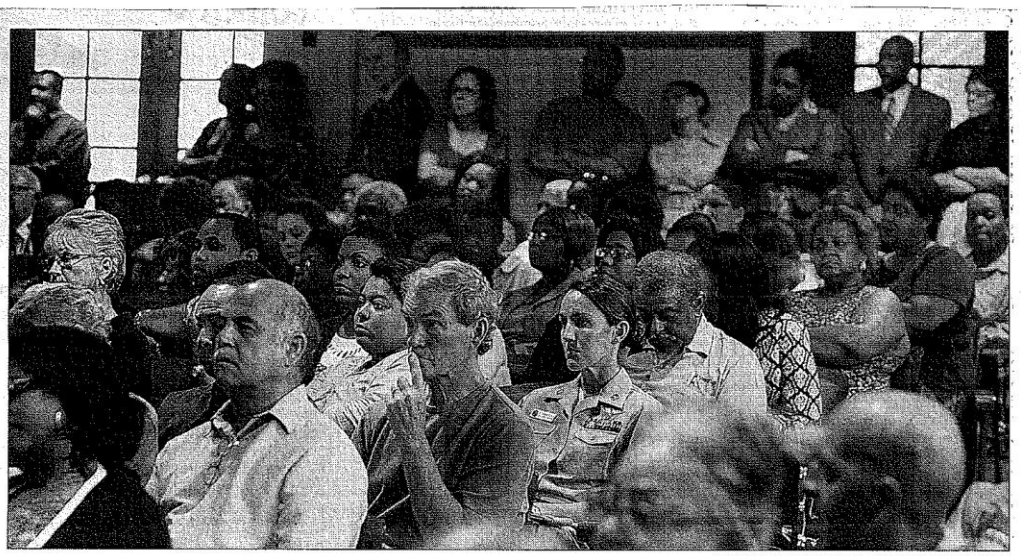
See **HAMPTON, PAGE 9**

thanks and praise

Hampton University President William Harvey, above, discusses the details of the Sunday morning shooting to support staff and faculty Monday. He praised the fast response of emergency personnel which "prevented a lot of carnage."

the suspect

Hampton city police have said they will not release the name of the suspected shooter until he is released from the hospital and formally charged. He is an 18-year-old who had previously attended the university.



DAVID B. HOLLINGSWORTH PHOTOS | THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Staff and faculty of Hampton University gathered Monday for an update on the campus shootings that occurred early Sunday morning.

HAMPTON | *Shooter followed delivery man into dorm*

Continued from Page 1

of additional ammunition, Harvey said.

"Who knows what he was going to do," the president said.

Hampton city police have said they will not release the suspect's name until he is released from the hospital and formally charged. The suspect, an 18-year-old who lived in Harkness before withdrawing from Hampton in November, had been visiting his brother in Norfolk, Harvey said.

The shooter parked off campus and walked onto the grounds, following the pizza delivery driver into the dorm after the doors had been opened for the driver.

He first shot the driver, Harvey said.

Harvey said the night manager told him that he left his office to see what was happening and the shooter came around the corner and "looked startled."

As he aimed the gun, the manager threw his forearms in front of his chest and face and was shot in each arm. He was hit in the leg as he dove for cover, Harvey said. Acmore quickly, Harvey said the campus police chief decided that because the shooter was in custody, there was no need to send an immediate alert. Harvey said he supported the chief's action.

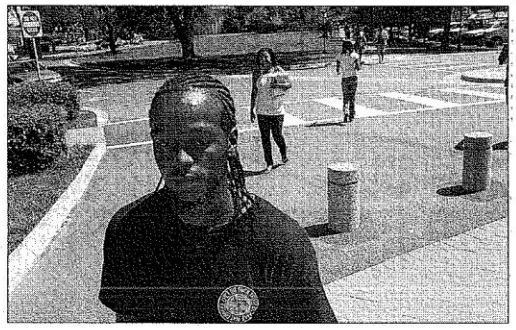
Hampton University's president says the school's security plan will be re-evaluated after the shooting.

Shortly after the shooting, the campus was put on lockdown, which prevented cars from entering or leaving campus, until about 9:30 a.m. Sunday.

Harvey said the school's security plan will be re-evaluated and that the campus community, particularly students, has to be vigilant in making safety a priority.

Propping dorm doors open with bricks, for example, Harvey said, should not be done.

"We are probably one of the safest campuses in America," Harvey said, "but I can't say in good conscience that we can 100 percent prevent peo-



Hampton University freshman Patrick Whitaker, 19, was back at school Monday, where he said, "It's quiet ... but it's always quiet."

↖ online video

Watch Hampton University President William R. Harvey as he discusses Sunday's campus shooting at PilotOnline.com.

netic this week as the university enters its final days of classes and exams. Students studied on benches under trees, and a Domino's Pizza delivery car zipped along Marshall Avenue.

Students said there was plenty of talk of the shooting but little fear.

"It's quiet," said Patrick Whitaker, a 19-year-old freshman who lives in Harkness, Andrea Brown and Alyssa Alford, both juniors, said if anything, the shooting will be a wake-up call for the private college and its 5,700 students.

Alford said students were discussing the incident in her math class when another student said that when she first heard shots, she asked someone: "Is that gunshots?"

The person responded, it can't be. This is Hampton.

Brown said: "I think some people now realize we're not on an island."

Pilot writers Cindy Clayton and Patrick Wilson contributed to this report.

Denise Watson Batts, (757) 446-

HAMPTON

Police charge 18-year-old in HU shootings

Warrants are used to gain access to mental health information about the former student

By David Macaulay and Samieh Shalash
dmacaulay@dailypress.com | 247-7838
sshalash@dailypress.com | 247-4537

HAMPTON — Police have arrested an 18-year-old former Hampton University student over a shooting spree on the campus on Sunday.

Odane Greg Maye, from Carnation Street, Richmond, got into the Harkness Hall dormitory at about 1 a.m., where he shot a watchman and a pizza delivery driver before turning the gun on himself, police said.

Maye

Maye has been charged with two counts of aggravated malicious wounding, two counts of use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, breaking and entering while armed, possession of a firearm on school grounds and discharging a firearm in an occupied dwelling, police spokeswoman Cpl. Paula Ensley said Wednesday.

After being discharged from a local hospital he was transferred to Hampton City Jail.

Police have investigated Maye's mental health background, according to search warrants. A warrant was executed for records on Maye from Hampton University's counseling center, student admissions, the registrar's office and the university health center.

Hampton police executed another search warrant at Riverside Behavioral Health center on Executive Drive in Hampton, requesting documents and notes related to mental health treatment.

Search warrants also have been taken out to look into records from a cell phone recovered from Harkness Hall and a flash drive described in the warrant as "a black and silver external/removable computer storage device with Odane written on it."

The victims, 43-year-old pizza delivery driver, Tom McCall and a 62-year-old dorm monitor, received non-life threatening injuries and are making a recovery.

HU President William Harvey said Monday that the gunman was a former freshman who voluntarily withdrew from classes in November after about 2½ months at the university.

He went to New York City to live with his mother after dropping out, Harvey said. The gunman was visiting his brother in Norfolk before the shootings.

Harkness Hall resident Martin Awanjo said that the day of the shooting, residence life staff used dogs to search rooms in the dormitory and found four toy BB guns, alcohol and illegal drugs.

Awanjo, a freshman, said letters were issued to students Tuesday that either said they were being "written up" or ordered them to leave the 220-resident dorm by 5 p.m.

University spokeswoman Yuri Rodgers Milligan said no firearms were found in the "health, safety and welfare inspection."

WVEC.COM

HAMPTON

Comments | Recommended

Letter to parents: HU president tries to assure parents following weekend shooting

01:32 PM EDT on Wednesday, April 29, 2009

By Dottie Wikan, WVEC.com

HAMPTON – The suspect in the weekend shooting at a Hampton University dorm remains hospitalized, Hampton police said.

Meantime, HU President Dr. William Harvey has sent a letter to parents about Sunday's events at Harkness Hall.

He stresses, "Please be assured that the Hampton University continues to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our campus. There is no greater priority for us than the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. We are working hand-in-hand with law enforcement authorities to confirm exactly what happened and why."

The suspect is a former student who withdrew from HU during last semester.

On campus, classes ended Tuesday and students are preparing for finals, which begin Thursday, HU spokeswoman Yuri Milligan said.

She also says Harkness Hall remains open and counseling is still available for anyone who needs it.

13News Reports

HU shooting investigation

Suspect's brother talks

Dr. Harvey has held several closed meetings to talk with students, faculty and staff.

He's stood behind the campus police chief's decision to wait about two hours before sending a campus-wide alert about the incident.

He's also said the campus is undergoing a security review.

13News talked with the suspect's brother, who lives in Norfolk. He says the teen drove from Richmond to the campus. He also says the 18-year-old has behavior problems.

DR. HARVEY'S LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As you may be aware, there was a shooting incident on the campus of Hampton University at approximately 1 a.m. on Sunday, April 26, 2009. No current students were involved and/ or injured and fortunately, there were no fatalities. A former student, currently residing in New York, allegedly shot a pizza delivery driver and the night manager in Harkness Hall. He then allegedly turned the gun on himself. All three were airlifted to area hospitals. Hampton City Police are investigating the incident, and the Hampton University community is praying for those injured.

When I arrived at the scene approximately 15 minutes after the shooting, the campus was on lockdown, the crime scene had been secured and Harkness Hall had been evacuated. Text messages were sent, a telephone message was left on campus telephones including dormitories and offices, and information about the situation was placed on the web site until 2:57 a.m. I actually remained on the scene until 5:00 a.m. and spoke to a number of students to make sure that they are aware of the services available to them on campus, including counseling.

Please be assured that the Hampton University continues to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our campus. There is no greater priority for us than the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. We are working hand-in-hand with law enforcement authorities to confirm exactly what happened and why. All of the first responders including, Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University Police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel, handled the shooting on campus in a swift, professional, and effective manner. They are real heroes. I commend them for immediately handling what quite possibly could have been an even more tragic situation.

In addition to the sessions that I conducted on the morning of the shooting, we have had at least two other sessions with students and one session with faculty and staff. I wanted this communication to come to you so that you would be the beneficiary of the latest information available to me.

With all good wishes,

William R. Harvey
President

Former HU student shoots two men, turns gun on himself

At noon on Monday Hampton University's (HU) Dr. William Harvey held a press conference to update the faculty, staff and students about the tragedy that occurred on campus early Sunday morning. Previous reports, Harvey said, were not accurate. "We are trying to be as transparent as possible."

Harvey recounted the facts in the incident as he said they were told to him: According to HU's campus Police Chief Leroy Crosby and other first responders, a former student of the University, who reportedly resides in New York, allegedly shot the night manager at Harkness Hall and a pizza delivery driver. The shooter, who turned the gun on himself and sustained injuries as a result, had three guns and plenty ammunition.

Preliminary reports indicate that the suspect, who knew campus policy, walked onto the grounds and forced his way into Harkness Hall, when the driver was delivering pizza. At this point, no one is clear why he committed this heinous act. Hampton Police Department had not released any motive for the shooting at press time.

The night manager sustained wounds to both arms and his leg, as he folded his arms across his upper torso to protect himself from receiving a fatal shot. Even though he was shot three times, Harvey said he was the "least hurt". He was treated, released and is in stable condition. Because it is an ongoing investigation, Crosby did not reveal his name.

All three males were transported to area hospitals to receive treatment. The 18 year-old shooter was sent by helicopter to Sentara Norfolk General. The 62 year-old Dorm Monitor and the 43 year-old pizza delivery person were treated at Riverside Regional Medical Center in Newport News.

Even though none of current students at the university were harmed, Harvey said some students expressed disappointment that they were not notified of the shooting by text or email until after 2:30 a.m. The decision to delay notification was made by Crosby, Harvey said, because the situation was under control and the suspect was in custody. "He was one of the boots on the ground. He was there and it was his decision."

However, HU's president says he accepts the blame for the tardiness in sending out the 8,900 text messages to 1,600 people. One had to be registered for the service to receive the electronic report. Signing up to receive text information is optional. Harvey said they may review the policy and look at making it mandatory.

Letters to the parents of Hampton University students with information about the incident and security measures on campus were mailed on Monday. A meeting with students was held to share facts and encourage safety. Students also held a support rally for residents of Harkness Hall.

See **"HU Shooting"** on pg. 16

HU Shooting
From Page 3

When Harvey arrived on the scene approximately 15 minutes after the shooting, he said the campus was on lockdown and the crime scene was under control. Harkness Hall had been evacuated and all methods of getting the word out, including the website, had been engaged. The helicopter was landing when he got to the scene.

"The real heroes are the first responders," Harvey said. "I want to thank all of the first responders including, Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel, for the professional way in which they handled the shooting on campus this morning," Harvey said in a press release. "Their response was swift, professional and effective."

When it comes to controlling movement on campus, HU's disadvantage is that people who cannot access the grounds by car, can walk onto the campus. Still, Harvey touted HU as "probably one of the safest campus in America." He indicated that he did not believe the campus could become 100 percent safe, unless a wall is erected around the entire campus. "We are not going to do that," he added.

Reports revealed that the shooter left the University voluntarily in November 2008. Therefore, he would have knowledge of the grounds and campus policy. The vehicle he was driving, which he parked elsewhere, belonged to his brother who lived in Norfolk.

Presently security measures include foot and mobile patrols. Under the University's policy, people can be randomly questioned to ascertain identity and movement. There is no policy to address issues differently after basic operating hours.

A gentleman spoke during the press conference expressing awareness and concern about doors to campus facilities that are not working properly. Harvey encouraged attendees to make sure door locks and swipe systems are working properly in their buildings throughout campus and to swiftly report any malfunctions.

On Tuesday, the office of Student Activities held a sign-up drive for the emergency messaging system in the Student Center Cyber Lounge.

Harvey encouraged everyone to be a part of keeping the students safe. Professors, the president said, "have to preach safety."

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Hampton University Shooting: Former Student Shot Two, Turned Gun On Himself

STEVE SZKOTAK | April 26, 2009 08:42 PM EST | AP

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HAMPTON, Va. — A former Hampton University student armed with three guns followed a pizza delivery man into the student's former dorm early Sunday, shot the delivery man and a dorm monitor, then turned the gun on himself, university officials said. All three survived.

No current students were injured and both victims and the alleged shooter were expected to recover. Officials could offer no motive for the shooting.

Hampton President William R. Harvey, who said he arrived within 15 minutes of the shooting, told a news conference the campus shooting could have been much worse.

"I think we are very, very fortunate. This could have been another _ you fill in the blank," Harvey said.

The 18-year-old former student, who is from New York City, apparently parked his car off campus to avoid a vehicle checkpoint at Hampton's main gate, then followed the pizza delivery man on foot and inside a freshman dormitory, Harkness Hall. Once inside, he shot the pizza man and entered the monitor's office and fired three shots at him, then shot himself, Hampton University Police Chief Leroy Crosby said.

Crosby said he didn't know what prompted the shooting.

The monitor, who suffered two gunshot wounds in his arms and a third in the leg, has been released from the hospital, Harvey said.

"He feels, as I do, that he was extremely lucky and blessed," Harvey said of the monitor.

The other two, including the alleged shooter, were in stable condition.

The shooting victims are 62 and 43. The university did not release their names.

Hampton police are leading the investigation and requested that details be withheld at the news conference, Crosby said.

Hampton police Cpl. Paula Ensley said Sunday afternoon the suspect had not yet been charged but no other details in the case were being released.

Jelani Holland, 18, a freshman from Los Angeles, said he and other students were playing music and video games in the all-male freshman dormitory when they heard a fire alarm sound early Sunday. As they left their rooms, they saw the delivery man shot in the neck and stomach outside the monitor's office. Police were applying pressure to his wounds, he said.

"He was shaking a lot and talking with police," Holland said.

Harvey said when he arrived at Harkness, a lockdown was already in place and Harkness Hall had been evacuated.

David Wilkins, a freshman from Germantown, Md., said when he and his fellow dorm mates left Harkness they were instructed to go to other dorms.

"A lot of people didn't know what was going on in Harkness," he said of other students on campus. He said the first alert wasn't received until around 2:30 a.m.

"People were trying to figure out what was going on," Holland said.

Hampton officials said the first alert was issued at 2 a.m. They defended the timing of the alerts but Harvey said: "We'll go over every aspect of this."

Hampton University is a private school in southeastern Virginia with about 5,700 students. It was founded in 1868 during Reconstruction to educate black leaders for the newly freed slaves.

On the Net:

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Three wounded in Hampton University shooting

April 26, 2009 | By Janet DiGiacomo CNN

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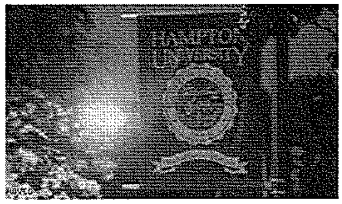

A former Hampton University student allegedly shot two people and himself, locking down the campus Sunday.

The campus of Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia, was locked down for several hours Sunday morning after a former student shot two people in a dormitory and then shot himself, university and police officials said.

The former student entered Harkness Hall shortly before 1 a.m. by following a pizza deliveryman, said the university's president, Dr. William Harvey, at an afternoon news conference.

The former student shot the deliveryman and the night manager of the dorm, who came into the hall after he heard shots, Harvey explained. The man then shot himself.

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No one was killed in the incident, which prompted the evacuation of the dorm and a lockdown of the campus, the president said.

The three wounded were taken to area hospitals, Harvey said. The dormitory night manager was treated and released, he said.

Hampton city police said they had the shooter in custody.

The motive for the shootings is not clear, university and law enforcement officials said.

Harvey praised the first-responders to the incident, saying their quick action likely averted further tragedy. He also lauded the school's system of text messages, e-mails and phone messages that warned students about the situation and the campus lockdown.

Hampton is about 70 miles southeast of Richmond, Virginia.

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Shooting on Hampton University Campus Leave 3 Injured

Sunday, April 26, 2009
Associated Press

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HAMPTON, Virginia — A former student shot the night manager and a pizza delivery man inside a Hampton University dorm early Sunday before turning the gun on himself, police and school officials said Sunday. All three were hospitalized.

No students were injured in the shooting reported around 1 a.m., Hampton police said.

The suspect, who is from New York, shot two Hampton men, ages 62 and 43, before shooting himself, police said in a statement.

The 18-year-old shooter is a former student and the older victim is the night manager of the dormitory, Harkness Hall, school spokeswoman Yuri Rodgers Milligan said.

Names of those involved were not immediately released.

"The Hampton University community is praying for those injured in this tragic incident." Hampton President William R. Harvey said in a statement.

Jelani Holland, 18, a freshman from Los Angeles, said he and other students were playing music and video games in the all-male freshman dormitory when they heard a fire alarm about 12:30 a As they left their rooms, they saw the delivery man shot in the neck and stomach outside the nig manager's office. Police were applying pressure to his wounds, he said.

"He was shaking a lot and talking with police," Holland said.

Officials did not have the motive for the shooting, which prompted a campus lockdown that continued Sunday morning while police investigated.

Per university policy, all students, faculty and staff were notified about the situation via text message and e-mail.

Harvey said when he arrived on campus about 15 minutes after the shooting, a lockdown was already in place and Harkness Hall had been evacuated.

Hampton University is a private school in southeastern Virginia with about 5,700 students. It was founded in 1868 during Reconstruction to educate black leaders for the newly freed slaves.

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Published on HamptonRoads.com | PilotOnline.com (http://hamptonroads.com)

Three injured in shooting at Hampton University dormitory

HAMPTON

A former Hampton University student armed with three loaded handguns shot a dorm manager and a pizza delivery driver inside a school dorm early Sunday before turning the gun on himself, officials said.

All three survived, and a suspect was quickly arrested. A motive for the shooting was not clear.

The dorm manager, who was shot three times, had been released from a hospital on Sunday. The delivery driver and the suspect, age 18, remained in a hospital in stable condition, university officials said.

No students were injured in the shooting at Harkness Hall, an all-male dorm, which happened around 1 a.m., Hampton police said.

Hampton University President William R. Harvey and campus police Chief Leroy Crosby met with reporters and students on campus Sunday afternoon to answer questions.

Harvey said he arrived about 15 minutes after the shooting to find the campus on lockdown, the dorm evacuated and the suspect in custody.

"This is a tragedy, and we are fortunate and blessed that no student was involved," Harvey said. "The Hampton University community is praying for those injured in this tragic incident."

Crosby said the shooter, who had been visiting his brother in Norfolk, parked a vehicle off campus and walked onto campus, walking behind the pizza delivery driver into the dorm after the doors were opened for the driver.

Harvey spoke with the dorm manager after he was released from the hospital.

When he heard gunfire, Harvey said, the manager pulled a fire alarm, prompting students to evacuate.

"What he wanted to do was to immediately evacuate, which was the right thing to do," Harvey said.

According to Harvey, the dorm manager heard gunfire, got up from his desk, and the pizza delivery driver "half fell" into the manager's office.

"That's when the gunman came around the door and aimed the gun at him," Harvey said.

As the gunman fired, the dorm manager raised his hands and was shot three times - once in each arm and once in a leg.

The gunman shot himself by the time campus police arrived on the scene, Crosby said. He did not try to rob the delivery driver, he said.

The shooter's mother lives in New York and his father lives in Richmond, university officials said. A statement from the university said the gunman had been living in New York; Hampton police identified him as being from Richmond.

The shooter lived in Harkness Hall when he was a Hampton student for several months in the fall of 2008, university officials said. He withdrew from the school in November.

Names of those involved have not been released. Hampton police are heading the investigation; they released little information and did not join university officials at Sunday's news conference.

Harvey met with students at various times on Sunday, praised efforts of first responders, and said the university would release as much information as it could to the public about the shooting.

University officials held a closed meeting for students Sunday to answer their questions. About 220 students live in Harkness Hall, but several students said campus was quiet early Sunday because it was a warm weekend and many students were out.

A meeting for students will be held at 5 p.m. today in Ogden Hall.

Jelani Holland, 18, a freshman from Los Angeles, said he and other students were playing music and video games in the dorm when they heard a fire alarm about 12:30 a.m., The Associated Press reported. As they left their rooms, they saw the delivery man shot in the neck and stomach outside the night manager's office. Police were applying pressure to his wounds, he said.

"He was shaking a lot and talking with police," Holland told The AP.

Harvey said telephone messages were sent out to the campus immediately after the shooting, but text messages did not go to students until about 3 a.m.

Text messages are sent only to students who signed up to receive such alerts, he said.

The university will review that policy as it looks into the incident, he said.

Students said they were shaken by what happened, and some who signed up for text alerts said they never got the alert.

Kristen Douthit, a sophomore from New York, said she questioned a security system that allowed an armed man to get inside a dorm. Had he not shot himself, she said, the situation could have been worse.

"If you went on a spree... a lot of people could have been very hurt," she said. "I know that parents are worried and students are really upset."

Harvey said the school would be reviewing campus security, including the ability of someone to walk onto campus unrestricted.

"There is no greater priority for us than the safety of and well-being of our students, faculty and staff," he said. "We will look at every aspect of this."

In his 31 years as school president, Harvey said, there had never been a shooting like Sunday's.

Patrick Wilson, (757) 446-2957, patrick.wilson@pilotonline.com

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April 26, 2009

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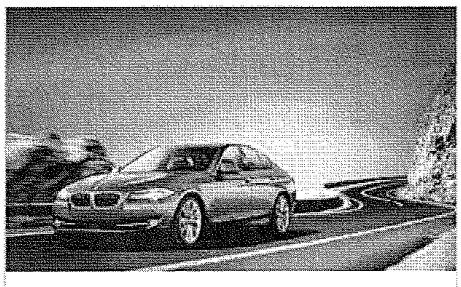

JOY IS DYNAMIC.

At approximately 1 a.m. Hampton Police Division along with the Hampton University Police and the Hampton Fire and Rescue Division received a complaint of a shooting in the 700 block of Hunnington Avenue located on the campus of Hampton University. When officers arrived on scene they found three3 males suffering from gunshot wounds.

Police revealed that the suspect is an 18-year-old Richmond man, Shooting Investigation: 700 Block of Hunnington Avenue

On April 26, 2009, at approximately 1 a.m., the Hampton Police Division along with the Hampton University Police and the Hampton Fire and Rescue Division received a complaint of a shooting in the 700 block of Hunnington Avenue located on the campus of Hampton University. Once officers arrived on the scene they located three males all suffering from gunshot wounds. entered a dorm building located in the 700 block of Hunnington Avenue. Once inside, the suspect shot two men, a 62-year-old Hampton man and a 43-year-old Hampton man, before turning the gun on himself. All three men have been transported to local hospitals where they are currently being treated for their injuries. No current students at the University were involved or injured during this incident.

The investigation is still ongoing and further information will be released as it becomes available.

Anyone with information that will assist police is encouraged to contact the Hampton Police Division at 727-6111 or Crime Line at 1-888-LOCK-U-UP. Crime Line callers remain anonymous and never appear in court. If a Crime Line call results in an arrest, the caller is eligible for a reward up to $1,000.00.

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Students voice concerns at meeting

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Updated: Tuesday, 28 Apr 2009, 11:38 AM EDT
Published : Sunday, 26 Apr 2009, 4:41 AM EDT

- Melanie Woodrow

HAMPTON, Va. - "We absolutely got lucky because there was no loss of life - none," Hampton University President, Dr. William Harvey's said of this weekend's events.

Early Sunday morning a former student walked into an HU dorm, armed with three loaded guns and shot two men, before shooting himself.

Now that campus is secure, school officials are answering to students who say they still feel insecure.

"The fact that it happened once should be an indicator they need to change some things," said Senior Leon Hendrix.

Hendrix attended Monday night's meeting held by the Vice President of Student Affairs and the HU Police Chief.

Hendrix says he wasn't satisfied with what he heard. Especially when he asked what students should do if a similar shooting ever occurred. He says campus officials told him to ask his Resident Adviser.

"Which I think is absolutely ridiculous because if you get on an airplane they're not going to tell you if the plane goes down find me and I'll tell you how to swim," continued Hendrix.

Another question raised at Monday's meeting: why did campus officials wait two hours to alert students via text?

"As soon as you find out send it out to us so that if we were around Harkness we wouldn't go inside so if we were off campus we would stay off campus," said Moffett.

Chief Leroy Crosby told WAVY.com he stands by his decision.

"I knew immediately when I got there that the suspect was there and we apprehended him .. he was in custody and the situation was controlled," said Crosby.

Freshman Timothy Wiggins says he wants to see big changes when it comes to security on, and directly off campus.

"I hope they focus more on gun control as opposed to partying," said Wiggins.

USA TODAY

Three hurt in shooting at Hampton University in Va.

Posted 4/28/2009 8:48 AM

HAMPTON, Va. (AP) — A spokeswoman for Hampton University in Virginia says three people have been t aken to a hospital after a shooting in a dorm.

Spokeswoman Yuri Rodgers Milligan says police believe the shooter is a former student who was one of the three injured early Sunday. A night manager for the Harkness Hall dorm at the school in southeastern Virginia was also hurt. The third victim was not identified but was not a student.

Milligan says all three are alive but she doesn't have an update on their conditions. Officials don't yet know the shooter's motive.

Per university policy, all students, faculty and staff were notified about the situation via text message and e-mail.

The school remains on lockdown while police investigate.

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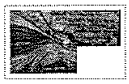
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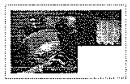
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Published: April 30, 2009

Richmond Man Charged in Hampton University Shooting

By AP

A Richmond teenager has been charged with wounding a pizza delivery man and a dorm monitor in a campus shooting at Hampton University. Hampton police say 18-year-old Odane Greg Maye was arrested Wednesday on charges of aggravated malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony and several other counts.

The former Hampton student is accused of following a pizza delivery man into a dorm early Sunday and shooting the man and a dorm monitor. Police say Maye then turned the gun on himself. All three men were taken to a local hospital for treatment.

No motive has been released. Maye was being held at the Hampton City Jail. A call to the jail Thursday wasn't answered and it wasn't immediately known whether Maye has a lawyer.

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HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

The Student CONNECTION

FEATURED STORY

President Harvey's Letter to Students about the Shooting Incident

Dear Students:

As I am sure you know, there was a shooting incident on the campus of Hampton University at approximately 1 a.m. on Sunday, April 26, 2009. No current students were involved and/ or injured and fortunately, there were no fatalities. A former student, currently residing in New York, allegedly shot a pizza delivery driver and the night manager in Harkness Hall. He then allegedly turned the gun on himself. All three were airlifted to area hospitals. Hampton City Police are investigating the incident, and the Hampton University community is praying for those injured.

When I arrived at the scene approximately 15 minutes after the shooting, the campus was on lockdown, the crime scene had been secured and Harkness Hall had been evacuated. Text messages were sent, a telephone message was been left on campus telephones including dormitories and offices, and information about the situation was placed on the web site at 2:57 a.m. Hampton University Chief of Police, Leroy Crosby, indicated that he did not send the above message until approximately two hours after the shooting because he felt there was no danger to any student, faculty, or staff due to the fact that (a) there was a lone shooter who had been apprehended, (b) the crime scene needed to be totally under control for the police, lab technicians, and emergency medical personnel, and (c) he wanted to make sure that the information that wassent to everyone was accurate. I actually remained on the scene until 5:00 a.m. and spoke to a number of students to make sure that they are aware of the services available to them on campus, including counseling.

Please be assured that the Hampton University continues to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our campus. There is no greater priority for us than the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. We are working hand-in-hand with law enforcement authorities to confirm exactly what happened and why. All of the first responders including, Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University Police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel, handled the shooting on campus in a swift, professional, and effective manner. They are real heroes. I commend them for immediately handling what quite possibly could have been an even more tragic situation.

In addition to the sessions that I conducted on the morning of the shooting, and my speaking to students in the Chapel at the 11:00 service on Sunday morning, we have had at least two other sessions with students and one session with faculty and staff. I wanted this communication to come to you so that you would be the beneficiary of the latest information available to me.

With all good wishes,

William R. Harvey
President

HU Campus Community Comes Together After Shooting Incident

Hampton University President Dr. William R. Harvey has met with students, faculty and staff to discuss the shooting incident on campus on April 26. Harvey recounted the details of the incident and the status of the victims.

"We are grateful there was no loss of life and no students were involved in any way," said Harvey. "We pray for all those who were shot and the one who allegedly did the shooting."

Harvey met with the residents of Harkness Hall shortly after the incident. He also spoke with students at the Sunday service at the Memorial Church. Harvey along with Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Barbara Inman also met with students in the Student Center the same day as the incident.

Harvey praised the first responders to the scene, including the Harkness Hall dormitory personnel, the Hampton University police, Hampton City Police, Hampton Fire Department, Hampton EMT and Hampton University student affairs personnel. He said that without swift, professional, and effective responses, there could have been a much larger tragedy.

Harvey encouraged faculty and staff to make sure door locks and swipe systems are working properly in their buildings throughout campus and to swiftly report any malfunctions.

Letters to the parents of HU students with information about the incident and security measures on campus were mailed the day after the incident. Also, the Office of Student Activities had a sign-up drive for the emergency messaging system on April 28 through May 1 from noon - 2 p.m. in the Student Center Cyber Lounge. Students also may sign up anytime by visiting http://www.hamptonu.edu/current_undr. The Student Leaders also made care packages for the two injured victims.

Inman said the Student Counseling Center is always available to students, and they are especially encouraged to take advantage of the service now.

"We are keeping students and parents informed, and we want the university community to be assured that student safety is our number one priority," Inman said.

-Yuri Milligan

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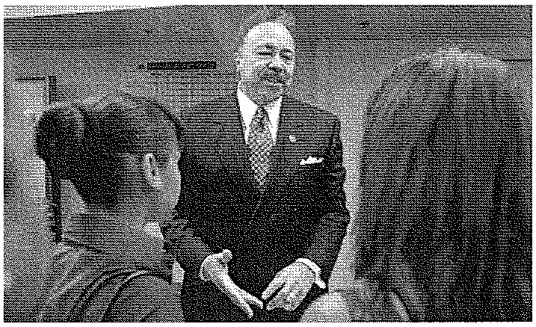

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Hampton University President Dr. William R. Harvey talks with students after the press conference Sunday afternoon. Dr. Harvey spoke to students and media about the triple shootings on campus hours earlier.
(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

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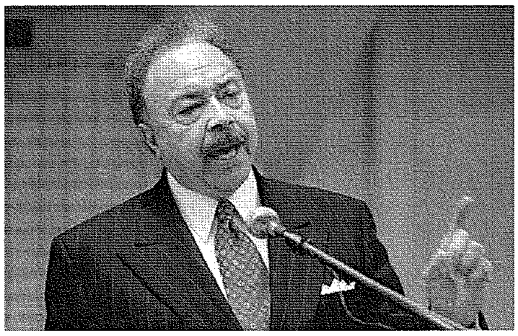

Dr. William R. Harvey, Hampton University president (file photo)
(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

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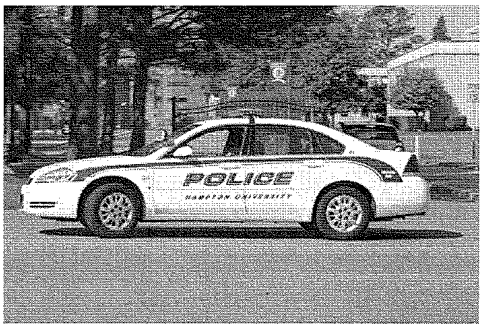

A Hampton University police car patrols the campus following a triple shooting on campus early Sunday morning. Three men were transported to local hospitals.

(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

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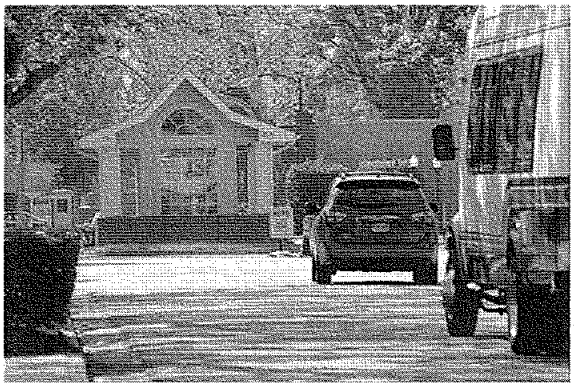

The scene at the main guard house on the Hampton University campus Sunday morning following a late night shooting at Harkness Hall, one of the on-campus dormitories.
(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

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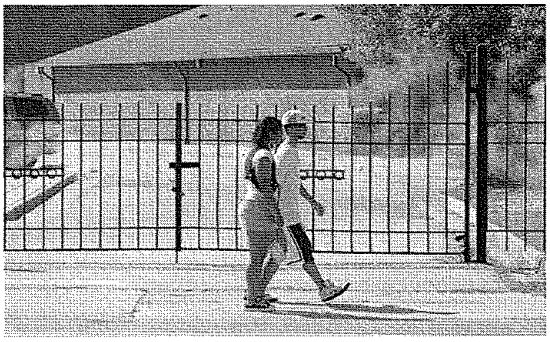

Students walk in front of closed gates at Hampton University Sunday morning. The campus was locked down following a triple shooting in a dormitory early Sunday morning.

(Joe Fudge, Daily Press / April 26, 2009)

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Tragedy at Hampton University Leaves Three Hospitalized

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11:20 AM EDT, April 26, 2009
HAMPTON
Hampton University was on lockdown Sunday after three people — including the shooter — were shot in the lobby of an on-campus dormitory.
A former HU student came to campus before 1 a.m. and shot the 62-year-old night manager of an on-campus dormitory, as well as a 43-year-old pizza delivery driver who happened to be standing nearby, said Hampton police spokeswoman Paula Ensley.
The former student, an 18-year-old from the Richmond area who left the school several months ago, then turned the gun on himself, Ensley said.
All three people shot were taken to area hospitals, and were listed in stable condition. One was flown to a hospital by helicopter . "It doesn't appear at this time that the injuries are life threatening," Ensley added.
Police were trying to piece together a motive or the facts that led to the shooting. "The detectives are actively working on all that right now," Ensley said. "We don't know at this time."
No current students were injured in the shooting, police said.
The shooting occurred in the lobby of Harkness Hall, a four-story brick building on Huntington Road. That's a street that near the southwest corner of the HU campus, near a steam plant and northeast of the James Creek.
HU was on lockdown Sunday morning while police investigate. Both Hampton police and Hampton university police were investigating, with city police leading the investigation, Ensley said.
After the shooting, students, faculty and staffers were notified via text messages and voice mails, said Leha Byrd, who works in the university relations department. Byrd said she did not immediately know what time the message was sent out.
Some students told the Daily Press Sunday morning that they didn't get such a message. "Some students and parents are telling us that as well," Byrd said. "We're not sure what the glitch was. We'll have to work that out as we go ack through this, as we identify our system of how we do things. But we did take the official step of sending the texts and voice mails out."
Sunday morning, all roads going in and out of the campus were block off, with university police officer driving an aggressive patrol around the campus' perimeter. Hampton city police officers were walking and patrolling on streets outside the campus, with at least one officer taking information from witnesses.
There was an eerie quiet over the campus Sunday morning. Only handfuls of students were walking around, instead of the flood of students that would typically be out on a Sunday morning to attend church services and other functions.
One student who was returning to her dormitory early Sunday — about the same time that police cars and fire trucks were heading to the shooting scene –said that she and a lot of other students found out about what happened through the social networking website Facebook and text messages from friends.
The student, who didn't want to be identified, said she regularly checks Facebook using her cell phone.
The student said that at first she though the emergency vehicles she saw were part of a campus drill, but soon realized that it was more serious, especially when she saw and heard a helicopter land on campus.
She said some students were confused and shocked that something like this could happen on campus, and they were still trying to find out exactly what happened.
HU spokeswoman Yuri Rodgers Milligan said officials were deciding whether to hold a press conference on the shooting later in the day.

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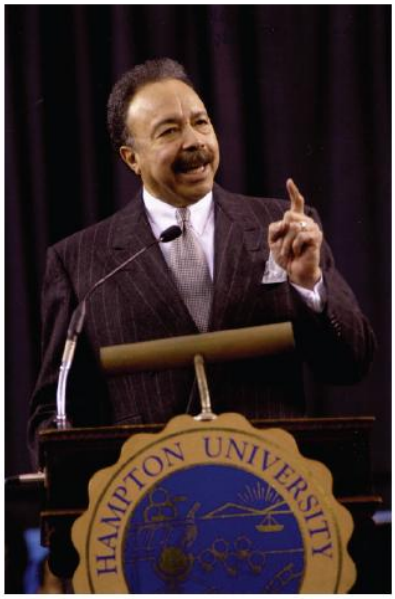

Citizen of the Year: Dr. William Harvey (Courtesy of Hampton University)

By http://bio.tribune.com/SAMIEHSHALASH
9:01 p.m. EDT, June 24, 2011

HAMPTON ——

Hampton University President **William Harvey** and his wife, Norma, have dipped into their own pockets — again — to pay for staff raises.

The couple gave $166,000 to raise hourly salaries of all full-time staff to at least $8 an hour, HU announced. The minimum wage in Virginia is $7.25.

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The raise to $8 is effective July 1 and will apply to 118 staff members who make less than that, including housekeeping, janitorial and grounds workers.

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The donation follows a $1 million gift the Harveys announced in May to raise salaries for instructional staff beginning in fall 2011. The donation guaranteed HU's approximately 300 faculty members a raise of 3 percent to 8 percent for the next three years.

This is the second time the Harveys have supported raises for HU's hourly support staff. In 2006, the couple, donated $45,000 to pay for a a 5 percent raise for those earning less than $7.

In a statement, Harvey said that every employee at Hampton University already earns more than the minimum wage of $7.25, and that the bump to $8 is to express appreciation.

"We wanted to show our gratitude to those staff members who serve the campus behind the scenes," he said. "These dedicated employees serve our faculty, administration and students and warrant our recognition."

The couple has donated more than $2.2 million to the university since 2001.

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Trouble at Texas Southern

by Christina Asquith, December 14, 2006

Trouble at Texas Southern

The campus murder of a TSU student sets in motion a chain of events that would eventually bring down President Priscilla Slade and members of her administration.

By Christina Asquith

On the night of Dec. 4, 2004, a Texas Southern University student named Ashley Sloan was gunned down near campus, struck in the temple by a bullet after leaving a party with her friends. A fight inside the party had reignited outside, and someone pulled a gun. Sloan's friends were able to shield themselves behind a car as the shots rang out, but the 20-year-old sophomore didn't make it in time. She died in the parking lot.

The murder prompted an outpouring of accusations on campus of poor security. For many Houstonians, the shooting raised old fears of the violence-plagued TSU of the 1990s, which many thought had since been cleaned up by then-president Dr. Priscilla Slade.

As it turns out, the shooting would set in motion a series of events that not only called into question Slade's multimillion dollar "academic renaissance," but revealed a campus administration entrenched in scandal.

A Dazzling Vision

Slade's vision for TSU was dazzling and reflected her own larger-than-life personality. At 53, Slade turned heads on campus, cruising around in her black Jaguar convertible and designer suits. For years, TSU, located eight miles from downtown Houston, lagged academically in comparison with nearby public universities Texas State University and the University of Houston, but Slade was said to be taking the provincial TSU and putting it on the map, nationally and internationally.

In her first few years as president, Slade had doubled enrollment to 12,000 students, launched the university's first $50 million fund-raising campaign and a construction boom on campus, including a $25 million science building that features a four-story glass atrium and a NASA research center.

There is a new Tavis Smiley School of Communications, a new School of Public Affairs and a new College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences. The law school has been expanded and, for the first time in its history, posted higher Texas Bar exam passage rates than its main competitor, Texas Tech University. And in Diverse's Top 100 rankings, TSU was the second highest producer of first professional degrees for African-Americans during the 2004-2005 academic year, second only to Howard University. The School of Business received accreditation in 2002, and the university has added master's and doctoral programs in administration of justice, urban planning and environmental policy, pharmaceutical science and others. So although, some professors grumbled about Slade's flashy persona, more felt she made TSU proud.

TSU spokeswoman Gayle Colston Barge points to new initiatives like the on-campus child care center and a summer remedial program for freshmen as examples of how TSU is helping support students, more than 40 percent of whom are the first in their families to attend college.

"I don't know if that would have happened under just anyone; it could have, but I doubt it," says TSU regent David Diaz, about the university's growth.

TSU appeared to be putting the problems of the 1990s behind it. Before Slade arrived, the university switchboard often went unanswered, professors often didn't show up for class and there was no standard accounting procedure. There was even a movement afoot to place the school under the University of Texas System because of mismanagement and poor bookkeeping.

However, to some on campus, Ashley Sloan's murder demonstrated that Slade's positive public image masked deep problems throughout the university. For instance, says Justin Jordan, freshman class president at the time of Sloan's murder, the push for higher enrollment brought dangerous students to campus. Although the students had no real

interest in academia, their tuition and fees helped fuel Slade's grandeur, he says. And according to The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, only 6 percent of TSU's students who graduated in spring 2005 had earned their degrees within four years, one of the lowest rates in the nation.

"These are just fancy buildings. Nothing's happening in them," says Jordan. "It's sick that people would treat an institute of higher learning like this."

Jordan decided that he had to do something.

A Fortuitous Find

A few weeks after Sloan's death, Jordan and two friends organized a student safety committee, although the gunman, 24-year-old Alex Morris, had already been captured. Morris, who wasn't a TSU student, was eventually convicted and sent to prison. Jordan and his friends, meanwhile, began patrolling TSU's 150 acre-campus, documenting areas in need of additional streetlights and identifying red emergency call boxes in need of repair.

During one of these patrols, Jordan and his friends, Oliver Brown and William Hudson, came across an abandoned dump truck behind TSU's General Services Building that contained copies of the university payroll, complete with employee names, salaries and social security numbers.

With the help of a member of the administration, the three students combed through the payroll, uncovering payments to the daughter of a TSU vice president and a monthly payment of $2,500 to "Steven M," a former library employee who hadn't worked there in years, they allege. They used the documents to force a meeting with administrators.

When the three young men asked Quintin F. Wiggins, TSU's senior vice president for finance, to explain the campus's poor condition and lax security, they said he blamed "them White boys and them Republicans in Austin" for inadequate funding. "Hell, I get upset when I think about the University of Texas sitting up there on $20 billion in endowment," Wiggins told them, according to legal documents filed by the students.

Repeated phone calls from *Diverse* to Wiggins's attorney seeking comment went unreturned.

"[TSU administrators] told them, 'We're all Black, so keep it quiet. Don't expose your dirty laundry to White folk,'" says Dr. Bobby Mills, a TSU sociology professor and a mentor to the students. "They assumed because these young men were Black that they could give them a snow job. They weren't stupid enough to fall for that."

On Jan. 11, 2005, the students issued an open letter to Texas Gov. Rick Perry disclosing alleged corruption at TSU. They prepared a petition to circulate calling for Slade's resignation. Around campus, they became known as the "TSU 3."

In an attempt to defuse the growing controversy, Slade met with the three students in her office in late January 2005.

When Slade asked what she could do to stop the petition, Jordan told her to resign.

Over the next few months, Jordan says he was contacted several times by Slade's office. He says he was offered, among other things, the opportunity to spend a semester abroad in Italy or transfer to Texas State University, as well as a job working in the president's office — things he interpreted as bribes to keep quiet. Sensing they were getting in over their heads, the trio began secretly recording many of their meetings, which is legal in Texas.

The TSU 3 compiled their findings into a 20-page "Special Crisis Report," but it was largely ignored. The students found conflicts of interest at every turn. For example, two state representatives were on TSU's payroll as guest lecturers. Jordan submitted the report detailing corruption to the TSU Board of Regents in the summer, but they responded in August 2005 with a vote of confidence for Slade.

Jordan and Brown then traveled to the state capital in Austin to turn the report over to Gov. Perry, who referred them to Macgregor Stephenson in his Office of Higher Education.

"The students were very interested in protecting the institution and the allegations they made were very serious, but I wasn't in a position to validate them," Stephenson said, adding that he "forwarded the matter to the TSU board of regents."

He didn't follow up.

On campus, the young men's hard work went unappreciated by most students. During a Student Government Association meeting, the TSU 3 went to the microphone to explain their findings but the crowd was only interested in playing music and using the podium to give shout-outs to fraternities and sororities.

The more the TSU 3 pursued their claims, the more cases of corruption they unearthed. They updated the Special Crisis Report three times, including new evidence that two highly publicized parking garages were built for as much as $20 million over budget.

"At first, I thought about not going forward," recalls Brown. "I told Hudson and Jordan that if we do this, it could cost us our school records. We could possibly go to jail, or even be physically harmed. They said, 'Hey, I'm willing to die for this because it's time for TSU to change.' I realized if they're willing to sacrifice their lives, I'd do the same in the name of justice."

Jordan says the administration soon began trying to intimidate them into silence.

The students say they were followed around and harassed by campus police officers. In March 2005, Hudson and Jordan were arrested on accusations of printing employee's social security numbers on fliers. The two surrendered to police, made bond and went to court to face charges of "fraudulent use of identifying information." The charges were immediately dismissed as unfounded by District Court Judge Don Stricklin.

Then, in late Spring 2005, administrators brought the students before the Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committee on charges that included "inflicting mental harm," "insubordination," "vulgar language" and "disturbing a meeting." They say they were denied legal representation and told to write a letter to Gov. Perry saying that "everything was OK now" at TSU. As a result, Hudson was suspended for a year and required to take anger management classes in order to return. He was also fired from his campus job in the office of enrollment management, and all three were forced out of their roles in student government.

On Oct. 29, 2005, the TSU 3 filed a lawsuit against TSU's board of regents, Slade, five administrators and a campus police officer, alleging retaliation for their investigation. The students are seeking unspecified damages.

"They've had their education, their life, their career all slowed down. They've been ridiculed in front of students. They were very proud of their role in student government," says Patrick Gilpin, their lawyer. "These are very young men; they're not veterans like me. They're idealistic kids. They had discovered a lot of information and when they took it to the proper authorities, they were expelled and harassed."

A Growing Profile

In talking about Slade, almost everyone mentions her beauty, charm and glamour.

"She would say, 'I'm just a poor girl from Yazoo, Mississippi,'" says board of regents president J. Paul Johnson. "She thought we were the little engine that could. She made sure that we were a quality institution and not a quality Black institution."

The daughter of a minister and a secretary, Slade was one of seven children. She attended Mississippi State University as an undergraduate and received her master's from Jackson State University and a doctorate in accounting from the University of Texas at Austin in 1991.

Slade spent five years in the banking industry and taught accounting at Tougaloo College in Mississippi. She moved to Houston to teach accounting at TSU in 1991, and was named dean of the business school the next year. When former TSU President James M. Douglas left in 1999, Slade was appointed president on an interim basis, officially named president later that year.

Prior to her appointment, "The university was not moving forward. It had a lot of debt, morale did not seem to be high and more needed to be done with the curriculum, the finances and the legislature," says A. Martin Wickliff Jr., a former TSU regent who hired Slade. "She seemed like the type of person who had the vision and leadership skills that had turned around the School of Business."

Shortly after Slade took over the presidency, the federal Office of Civil Rights successfully settled a long-standing case regarding the unequal funding of HBCUs. TSU was to receive about $12.5 million a year above its normal funding for at least six years. Around that time, the university also received $2.7 million in a tobacco settlement. In addition, Slade launched the university's first capital campaign to raise $50 million with former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, who has Houston ties. The campaign is not complete, but Slade has claimed that $37 million has been raised so far, an amount now in dispute. And as the school's enrollment increased, so did its revenue from student tuition and fees, reaching $48 million in 2004.

"She's a dynamic person with a broad vision for the university who took a lot of bold steps, and she has gotten credit for a lot of people's work. The OCR money would have helped any president," says Dr. Sanders Anderson, head of the faculty council.

Slade's lifestyle grew along with the university. In 2005, she purchased a $1.2 million house and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on furniture, landscaping and artwork.

"She just got bigger than the institution. It became: 'Hey, look at what I've done,'" says a regent who requested anonymity because of the lawsuit Slade has filed against the board. "She believed this university couldn't survive without her greatness, and that was her downfall."

Nonetheless, the regents took no steps to rein in Slade, and dismissed the allegations made by the TSU 3.

Even as TSU ostensibly improved, there were signs of problems just below the surface. In 2004, the TSU police chief was fired after reporting missing funds. He eventually won $314,000 in a whistleblower lawsuit. Then, a university audit revealed hundreds of thousands of dollars of missing money from the $2.7 million tobacco settlement. As a result, the university had to reimburse the state. In early 2005, a senior administrator was indicted for stealing $22,000 from an internship program. More recently, the university paid for 26 security cameras. Five went to Slade's house and 21 are now "missing."

"We could almost have a [district attorney] substation out there," says Harris County District Attorney Charles A. Rosenthal Jr.

"We Trusted Her"

The TSU 3 had been threatened with expulsion, fired from jobs and harassed by the police. By the fall of 2005, they were feeling demoralized and ready to give up. "Every time we took information to someone, we ran into a brick wall," Jordan says.

The Harris County investigators receive hundreds of tips a week, but when they were approached by the TSU 3 in August 2005, they were impressed with the level of evidence the students had collected against Slade, who they were familiar with from past corruption cases at TSU.

"They were the insiders who knew things before we knew about them," says Donna Goode, chief of the public integrity division for the Harris County District Attorney's office. "They're pretty impressive young men. To have people this young and have some stake in this and subject themselves to the possibility of being retaliated against — it was a bold move on their part."

The district attorney's office quietly opened an investigation. Three months later, according to Johnson, a regent raised concerns over Slade's spending. Regent Belinda M. Griffin had visited Slade's home to pick up a purse Slade had bought for her during a university-related trip to China. According to the district attorney's office, Griffin was in awe over Slade's lifestyle and asked how she could afford the expensive artwork, furnishings and manicured lawns.

"Girl, the university is paying for it," Slade is said to have replied.
Griffin, who was on the finance committee, would have known that Slade was required by Texas state law to get board authorization for purchases of more than $25,000. Griffin raised concerns to the board over $87,000 in furniture purchases. Johnson says that when he looked into the issue, he found more of Slade's spending that was "outside the parameters."

The board discussed this during their regularly scheduled meeting in January 2006.

"We trusted her, and I think she misinterpreted the rules and regulations governing housing purchases," Johnson says, adding that he had intended for the board to "handle the matter internally."

But the next day, the district attorney's office subpoenaed the minutes of the executive meeting and called in all the board members for questioning.

"Someone told the DA," Johnson says. "As soon as the DA got involved, everyone's hands were forced."

That someone was the TSU 3, who didn't believe that the board could be trusted to monitor Slade.

With the district attorney's subpoenas bearing down on them, the board finally took action to check Slade. In February 2006 they hired the law firm of Bracewell & Giuliani to conduct an external audit of university spending. The details of Slade's lavish lifestyle poured forward: $260,000 in unauthorized spending to landscape and furnish her home; $10,000 on limousine costs; and a $9,000 bed.

The board stripped Slade of her spending authority and eventually terminated her. The TSU board rehired Slade in August to teach accounting, saying they were forced to do so given her tenured status. After a public outcry, they reversed that decision, prompting Slade to file a breach of contract lawsuit against the university.

Questions remain over how much the board knew and whether they were fiscally irresponsible. "There's no question that Dr. Slade made these purchases openly and that others knew about them," says Goode, of the district attorney's office. No formal charges have been brought against the board.

In August 2006, a grand jury indicted Slade and three administrators — Bruce A. Wilson, director of purchasing and senior vice president for administration; Wiggins; and Frederick L. Holts, who once worked as senior safety system engineer — on charges of "misapplication of fiduciary responsibility." The case goes to trial in February. Meanwhile, the district attorney's office continues its investigation, and as of late November was considering perjury charges against Slade.

"It was bad before, and it didn't get any better under her leadership," says Rosenthal. "There was the belief you could do whatever you wanted, as long as you wanted, because it wasn't the university's money, it was tax funds."

Slade's questionable spending is not unique among university presidents. For example, Dr. E. Gordon Gee, chancellor of Vanderbilt University, earns an annual salary of approximately $1.3 million, but he has come under criticism for spending $6 million of university money to renovate his university-owned mansion. American University President Benjamin Ladner did lose his job over $500,000 in unauthorized spending, which included European vacations and private parties. Both Vanderbilt and American are private universities.

In her final year at TSU, Slade earned a salary of $277,000, plus another $65,000 in housing, car and other benefits. Slade owned her house but sold it after she was fired.

Slade's attorneys did not return several phone calls and e-mails for this article. She is said to be living with her brother in Missouri City, Texas. But just before her indictment, she wrote a letter to the Houston Chronicle in April, in which she defended her spending as necessary and for the benefit of TSU (see sidebar).

Endgame for Slade

Late last month, TSU appointed James T. Boddie Jr., a retired U.S. Air Force brigadier general, as interim president. The university has also installed a new chief financial officer to root out existing corruption and suggest changes.

But Dr. Bobby Wilson, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, insists that despite the lawsuits, audits and indictments, there is no mismanagement at TSU.

"I've been here 30 years. There isn't any corruption. If there was, I would know about it," he says.

The new president will take on many of the same problems Slade tackled in 1999.

After many boon years, student tuition and fees increased by a whopping 22 percent this year after the administration "discovered a deficit" this July of $13.7 million. At least 178 jobs have been cut, including dozens of faculty. Salaries for faculty are stagnant for the first time in years. The university's bond rating has also been lowered to "negative." Questions loom over how much money Slade really raised after an audit found poor recordkeeping, unwise investing strategies and inaccurate reporting on financial documents regarding the $23 million endowment.

"Now, no one discounts what [the students] were talking about," says Anderson of the faculty council. "A lot of things they've said have come to fruition."

Even Johnson, who is being sued by the TSU 3, was impressed with their work. "Jordan's an admirable young man. He's diligent in his pursuit of what he believes is right."

Jordan says he was happy when the indictments finally came down, but his two friends lost some of their enthusiasm. Wilson lost a semester and is now trying to reenter TSU. Brown has left TSU and is an airline pilot. He hopes to return one day and finish his degree and go to law school.

"With corruption, everyone pays," Jordan says. "Now the faculty has to teach more classes, the students have had a tuition increase, the taxpayers — they're sick of paying more money, and people in the administration are going to jail. We are all paying somehow.

Adds Jordan: "Dr. Slade and the administration did a wonderful job of charming the board. They were mesmerized by her.

People were mesmerized by her."

Slade's Side of the Story

Dr. Priscilla Slade defended herself in a letter to the Houston Chronicle on April 12, 2006. Following is an excerpt from the letter.

In February 1999 I became interim president of Texas Southern University at a time when the very existence of the university was in question. After seven years of continuous effort, TSU is accredited by every relevant authority and has grown to become the second-largest historically Black university in the country.

Four months ago, during a visit to my home, Regent Belinda Griffin complimented my choice of furniture. I thanked her and candidly pointed out that the furniture was owned by TSU, as was the university's practice.

As a result, my professional reputation is under attack, and TSU's future is at risk. It is time for me to speak out.

I began my work for the university in 1999 without a written contract or even an agreed-upon salary. Rather than concern myself with compensation or benefits, I focused on the future of the university. At the time, I was settled in my home in Missouri City. Overnight, my residence became the "president's home." I was informed that the university "already" employed several persons whose jobs were to maintain the president's residence and assist with housekeeping. I did not interview or hire these employees; I welcomed them in my home, and they have continued to work since that time. Now I read that these costs are categorized as "questionable expenses" after an internal TSU audit.

Some press reports have concluded that I have spent more than twice the amount permitted under my contract. That conclusion is not true.
Expenses made under my direction come from two sources: those permitted under my contract (about $50,000) and those from the annual budget approved by the regents for my office (about $450,000). Neither has been exceeded.

What of the other "questionable" expenses? The regents' own investigators, Bracewell & Giuliani, concluded that every expenditure was of the nature that could be legitimately funded with public funds.
Although I had the discretion and authority to make each of these purchases, in hindsight, I recognize that I should have done a better job of communicating with TSU regents.

— Priscilla Slade, President, Texas Southern University

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The New York Times nytimes.com

August 25, 2007

Ex-University Head in Texas on Trial for Money Misuse

By RALPH BLUMENTHAL

HOUSTON, Aug. 24 — With Texas Southern University struggling to survive as one of the nation's largest historically black colleges, the former president once hailed as its savior faced a state jury here Friday, charged with misspending hundreds of thousands of dollars on personal luxuries.

A $1,000 silk canopy for a four-poster bed, $138,000 for landscaping and $61,600 for a security system are among the items that prosecutors say the former president, Priscilla Slade, fraudulently billed the public for and kept secret from trustees from 1999 to 2005.

The charges being considered in Harris County District Court carry penalties from probation up to life in prison.

Describing Ms. Slade, 55, as a "very fearsome leader" who intimidated underlings, Julian Ramirez, an assistant Harris County district attorney, said the evidence would show "Priscilla Slade had her own set of rules — if she wanted it, Priscilla Slade was going to buy it."

But before the jury of six women and six men that included two black men and one black woman, another portrait was painted by her lawyer, Mike DeGeurin, who said in his opening statement: "She worked 24/7 to save that university." Mr. DeGeurin characterized the expenditures as proper and denied that Ms. Slade had sought to conceal them.

"The records are there; it's not like they're hidden," he said, blaming subordinates for not reporting the expenditures to the university's regents.

"She was blindsided when the scandal hit the papers," he said.

The university's chief financial officer, Quentin Wiggins, was recently convicted on related charges and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

The revelations are the latest blow to Texas Southern, which has about 10,000 students and 45 buildings on a 150-acre campus in Houston's largely African-American Third Ward.

Established by the Legislature in 1947 as the Texas State University for Negroes, Texas Southern counts Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leland, former members of Congress, as alumni and has graduated more than one-quarter of all the black lawyers in Texas.

But the university has made many missteps. In 1997, the federal Department of Education, finding mismanagement of millions of dollars of student aid, required Texas Southern to pay the students first and then file for reimbursement, draining the university's coffers and leaving some students without money and forced to sleep in their cars. In 1999 the Legislature threatened to absorb Texas Southern into the University of Texas system or place it under another higher education umbrella.

Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, a Democrat whose district includes the campus, showed up in court on Friday, hugged Ms. Slade and spoke to prosecutors, saying later that she had not been taking sides and that she had faith in the judicial system.

But later at a news conference, Ms. Jackson Lee faulted Texas and federal officials for what she called the longstanding neglect of the university.

Ms. Jackson Lee and others called on Gov. Rick Perry to fill the four vacancies on the university's nine-member Board of Regents so that a new permanent president could be named. J. Timothy Boddie Jr., a retired Air Force brigadier general, has been interim president since November.

The university, about 85 percent of whose students are African-American, guarantees enrollment to all high school graduates. It claims a proud history as "the house that Sweatt built" from its segregation-era origins after a successful discrimination lawsuit by a black mail carrier, Heman Marion Sweatt, who was denied entry to the University of Texas School of Law in 1946.

Although the indictment broadly charges that Ms. Slade "misapplied" more than $200,000 in university money and failed to obtain approval for expenditures of more than $100,000, the prosecution's opening specified at least $429,579 in illegal spending.

This, Mr. Ramirez said, began shortly after Ms. Slade, then dean of the business school with a doctorate in accounting, was elevated to interim president in 1999 as Texas Southern scrambled to assuage lawmakers over the university's string of troubles.

Although initially paid a salary of $147,500 with a $50,000 expense account, Ms. Slade, then living in her own house in nearby Missouri City, "embarked on a spending spree that the board was not aware of," the prosecutor said. Among the expenditures for her house were $48,864 for furniture; $19,021 for landscaping; $21,807 for flooring; $21,878 for roofing; and $14,137 for drapes.

By 2005 when her base salary had grown to $248,334 a year plus $5,200 a month in housing and car allowances and a $50,000-a-year expense account, she built a $1.2 million house in Houston's exclusive Memorial section where, Mr. Ramirez said, she misspent $286,426 in university money on furniture, landscaping and security, sometimes using Texas Southern's vendors.

The first prosecution witness was Alphonso R. Jackson, the federal secretary of housing and urban development and a former chairman of the university board who said he and Dr. Slade had "had a very good relationship." When asked by the defense why he had not asked for receipts, he said that perhaps he should have, "but I trusted her."

Mr. DeGeurin defended the expenditures as befitting a president who needed to entertain.

"She considered it, visionwise, an extension of T.S.U.," he said, adding at another point, "Yes, even the bed." He defended, too, her purchases at Neiman Marcus instead of discount stores like Kohls. "That's not a crime," he said.

And later Mr. DeGeurin added, "Dr. Slade is not going to go third grade."

Maureen Balleza and Audrey La contributed reporting.

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Avoiding prison, Slade will repay TSU $127,000

2nd trial for ousted TSU president was scheduled to start soon

By BRIAN ROGERS Copyright 2008 Houston Chronicle
March 26, 2008, 7:05PM

Julio Cortez Chronicle
Attorney Mike DeGeurin and his client, former TSU President Priscilla Slade, smile after they struck an agreement with Harris County prosecutors Wednesday afternoon. Slade agreed to repay $127,672.18 in a plea deal that lets her avoid prison.

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Ousted TSU President Priscilla Slade agreed this afternoon to repay the historically black university $127,672.18 in a plea deal that lets her avoid prison.

In addition to repaying the money, Slade will also be given 10 years of deferred adjudication in exchange for the "no contest" plea. That means the finding of guilt will not be on her record if she completes probation. If she violates probation, the conviction would be put on her record and she could be sentenced to up to life in prison. She must also perform 400 hours of community service.

Prosecutors also insisted that Slade read the following statement, which she did in open court before state District Judge Brock Thomas:

"I accept responsibility as the president of Texas Southern University with regard to the expenditures described in the indictment as misapplications and not ensuring that Texas Southern University policies were followed. If I had the opportunity to do things differently, I would do so. My thoughts and prayers are with the Texas Southern University family to whom I apologize."

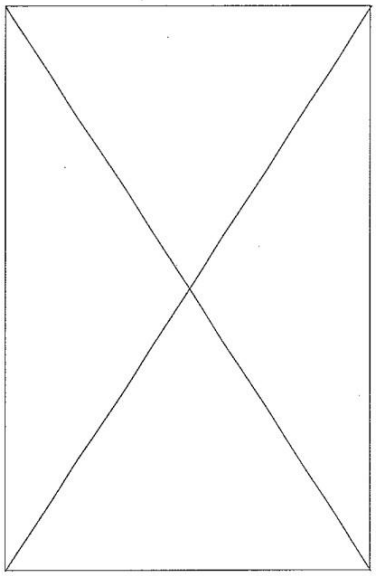
It was not immediately clear how the two sides arrived at the $127,672.18 figure. Slade's attorney, Mike DeGeurin, said the figure mostly represents TSU money that Slade spent fixing up her Missouri City home just before selling it.

The move comes more than five months after Slade's first trial, in which she was accused of spending more than $500,000 of the financially strapped school's money on personal expenses, including bar tabs and furniture. Texas Southern University regents fired Slade because of her spending habits in June 2006.

The eight-week trial ended in a mistrial when jurors deadlocked after deliberating for five days about whether the spending amounted to criminal behavior.

Slade was charged with misapplication of fiduciary property of more than $200,000, a first-degree felony that could have landed her in prison for life.

Prosecutors vowed to continue their efforts and had moved to force testimony from Slade's codefendants who didn't testify in the first trial.



SLADE AND TSU

2006

• **Jan. 26:** TSU regents meet privately to discuss questions about President Priscilla Slade's spending of school money on her new home near Memorial Park.

• **Jan. 30:** Slade writes a personal check to TSU for more than $138,000 to reimburse the school for landscaping at her new home. Regents say they still have questions about $87,000 that Slade spent furnishing the residence.

• **Feb. 3:** Regents strip Slade of her spending authority and announce they've hired the Bracewell & Giuliani law firm to investigate her spending.

• **March 16:** Regents place Slade on paid leave.

• **March 22:** Regents place Provost Bobby Wilson in charge of running the school.

• **April 6:** An internal TSU audit questions nearly $650,000 in Slade's spending over a seven-year period. Some of those purchases include Christmas gifts for regents, furniture and personal maid services.

• **June 7:** TSU regents fire Slade.

• **Aug. 1:** A Harris County grand jury indicts Slade on two counts of misapplication of

The second trial was expected to be shorter, punctuated with testimony from Slade's Chief Financial Officer Quintin Wiggins and Bruce Wilson, TSU's former vice president of purchasing.

The two were ordered to testify, but would have had limited immunity — keeping prosecutors from using their words against them.

Wiggins was convicted last May of helping Slade use money for personal expenses. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Wilson's trial is pending.

Sanders Anderson, chairman of TSU's faculty senate during Slade's last years as president, said the plea deal is a fair one.

"It's appropriate. I didn't see any point in sending her to jail for the time they were talking about. Paying back the university and the deferred adjudication is important," he said. "What she has gone through is sufficient as a penalty. She lost her position and hurt her reputation. I wouldn't see any plesure in her donning a jumpsuit and going to jail."

The spending scandal came to light in early 2006 when Belinda Griffin, a TSU regent at the time, visited Slade's new Memorial Park-area home and complimented her on the furnishings. Griffin was surprised when Slade informed her that the university had paid for much of the furniture.

Texas Gov. Rick Perry eventually replaced Griffin and the rest of the nine-member governing board because of the problems that were exposed during their watch.

Griffin said today the plea gives TSU a chance to put the scandal in the past.

"It's time for the university, the community and the new administration to focus on the best interests of the students at TSU," she said. "I'm, for one, just glad this is behind us."

Glenn Lewis, the new chairman of the Board or Regents, said he's glad the case is finished.

"I'm pleased that there won't be another trial," he said. "And I can't be unhappy about $127,000 in restitution. The university needs the money."

Chronicle reporter Matthew Tresaugue contributed to this story.

brian.rogers@chron.com

fiduciary property. She is later freed on $100,000 bond.

• **Nov. 27:** TSU regents hire retired NASA manager and Air Force Brig. Gen. James Timothy Boddie Jr. as interim president.

2007

• **Aug. 21:** Jury selection begins in the Slade trial.

• **Aug. 24:** Opening arguments begin.

• **Oct. 8:** Jury begins deliberations.

• **Oct. 12:** With jury deadlocked, judge declares mistrial.

2008

• **Feb. 8:** TSU regents hire John Rudley, the University of Houston's vice president for administration and finance, as the school's new president.

• **March 26, 2008:** Slade and prosecutors reach a plea agreement that allows her to avoid prison time by repaying TSU $127,672.18.

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January 12, 2008

Texas Southern U. Names Candidate to Succeed Slade as President

Texas Southern University's Board of Regents said on Friday that the only finalist to become the historically black university's president is John Rudley, currently the interim president of the University of Houston.

According to the *Houston Chronicle*, the regents voted, 9 to 0, in favor of naming Mr. Rudley as the sole candidate for the job. State law requires the regents to wait 21 days before making his appointment final.

Mr. Rudley succeeds Priscilla D. Slade, who was fired in April 2006 in the midst of a spending scandal. A jury hearing Ms. Slade's trial on charges arising from her spending record deadlocked in October. She is to be retried this spring.

In the 1980s, Mr. Rudley was Texas Southern's chief financial officer and internal auditor. He later worked for the U.S. Department of Education and the Tennessee Board of Regents. — *Lawrence Biemiller*

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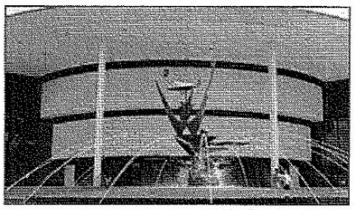
USA TODAY

Scandal at Texas Southern University ends quietly

Posted 7/14/2008 3:35 AM

By Juan A. Lozano, Associated Press Writer



by Pat Sullivan, AP

Students walk past the fountain at the Martin Luther King humanities building on the campus of Texas Southern University Wednesday, July 9, 2008 in Houston. After two high profile trials, including a mistrial, the cases against administrators at Texas Southern University are ending with little fanfare. (AP Photo/Pat Sullivan)

HOUSTON — While most students at Texas Southern University are in need of financial aid, their former president dressed in Gucci, had a $17,800 couch and used a 25-place dinner set that cost $40,000.

Priscilla Slade, a former accounting professor at the historically black, open-enrollment university, was using university money to dress, decorate and landscape her house, take spa treatments and exercise classes.

The scandal outraged the city and Slade, with her coiffed hair and dazzling smile, became a symbol of excess. Prosecutors charged her and two associates with crimes that could have put them behind bars for life.

But that didn't happen. After two high profile trials, including a mistrial, the cases are ending with little fanfare.

After a mistrial, Slade agreed to pay back $127,000 of the more than $500,000 she misspent from the university. Former TSU vice president Bruce Wilson agreed to pay back $12,000. Charges were dropped against another defendant.

The only conviction prosecutors obtained was against Quintin Wiggins, TSU's former chief financial officer. Wiggins was sentenced to 10 years in prison, but after little more than a year in prison, he was approved for parole earlier this month.

"It's clearly not what the prosecution originally envisioned when they started this case," said Michael Wynne, a Houston attorney not connected to the case.

The allegations against Slade coincided with the discovery of a pattern of financial mismanagement at TSU. Gov. Rick Perry demanded the resignations of the entire nine-member board of regents and the state put $13 million in funding on hold.

The case tarnished TSU's reputation and the new leaders say they are working to rebuild it.

"We have not been focused on these cases," said Glenn Lewis, the new chairman of TSU's Board of Regents. "We are focused more on the future. I think that's the best approach to it."

The fizzle with which the scandal ended disappointed some students.

"I'm mad, especially after tuition started going up and all, and then this happens," senior Jarel Brown said of the scandal's end.

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Nancy Oluwatopi, a junior, said the suspension of state funds meant she didn't get the financial aid she was counting on.

"I'm pretty upset at what she did, I'm extremely upset," she said. "It's just too many problems that weren't supposed to be there."

Slade's nearly two-month trial on a charge of misapplication of fiduciary property ended in October 2007 in a mistrial.

At first prosecutors vowed to retry Slade. But in March, Slade pleaded no contest and agreed to repay TSU more than $127,000 and perform 400 hours of community service. Her record will be cleared if she completes 10 years of probation.

Prosecutors said they had to weigh the importance of retrying Slade against the cost of another trial.

They might have had a difficult time in a retrial since several jurors in her trial expressed support for her.

"We are trying to move forward, as long as she was willing to make some acceptance of responsibility, there was some restitution to the university and an understanding of what she did was criminal," said prosecutor Donna Goode.

Mike DeGeurin, Slade's attorney, said his client should never have been indicted, much less put on trial, because she committed no crime.

"We could have retried the case over and over again," DeGeurin said. "The resolution of ending the waste of resources, energy and judicial resources with no finding of a crime and agreeing upon an arbitrary amount to reimburse the university seemed prudent."

Wilson agreed to pay nearly $12,000 to the school. Once the money is paid back, the charges against him will be dismissed.

"I think he's glad to have it over with," said Edward Mallet, Wilson's attorney. "It's a resolution that let everyone feel like they got something."

Prosecutors last year dropped charges against Frederick Holts, the university's senior safety system engineer, a day before jury selection in his trial was to start.

That left Wiggins, TSU's former chief financial officer and Slade's so-called "yes man," as the only defendant in prison.

He was sentenced to 10 years in May 2007 after being convicted on one count of misapplication of fiduciary property with a value over $200,000.

But the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles approved Wiggins' application for parole earlier this month. He could be free within two months.

Since the indictments were first announced in 2006, TSU has a new president and board of regents. It also received approval of a reorganization plan, which meant it could begin to spend some $13 million of state money that was put on hold after TSU's financial problems became public.

Trey Barton, a junior, said that he is happy with its new leadership.

"It bothered me last year, but now we have a new president that's taking care of keeping order," Barton said. "Back then it was a big deal. But it already blew over."

—

Associated Press writer Ana Ley contributed to this report.

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TSU Office of Communications & Media Relations

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 29, 2010

CONTACT EVA PICKENS
(713) 313-4205 o

TSU Gears Up for 2010 Alumni Summit

Texas Southern University's President Dr. John Rudley will host TSU's the second annual alumni summit for alumni, ex-students, and friends of TSU. The event will take place April 10th, from 10 a.m. until 12 noon at the Champion Pavilion, Minute Maid Park. Themed "Calling on You...Counting On You" the purpose of the summit is to invite all TSU alumni and friends to become re-engaged in the university.

The Office of Alumni Relations has organized this event to continue to increase the support and participation of alumni with Texas Southern University.

So why is this so important? "We must continue to expand communication with our alumni and increase resources to the university..., this is a good time to understand why it is so important for alumni to become re-acquainted with their alma mater." This is an opportunity to engage and reengage the support and commitment of the alumni," Brooks stressed.

ıe goal of this event continues to be to strengthen the relationships between the university and those persons who attended Texas Southern University. "The alumni are vital to the life of any University, and TSU is no different from other universities. It needs the support. The goal of the Summit is for all in attendance to leave committed by signing up to support and volunteer wherever TSU needs them," Brooks stated.

For more information contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 713-313-1363. RSVP by calling 713-313-7606. You may also visit TSU's website to register and to obtain additional information at www.tsu.edu.

###

Texas Southern University was founded in 1926 and became a state institution in 1947. Texas Southern possesses an impressive array of undergraduate and graduate programs, a diverse faculty, more than 80 student organizations, and an alumni network comprised of educators, entrepreneurs, public servants, lawyers, pilots, artists, and more, many of whom are change agents on the local, national and international stage. Nestled upon a sprawling 150-acre campus, Texas Southern has served as a cornerstone for developing the greatest potential in leaders from various socioeconomic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Texas Southern is located in the heart of the city, giving its students and faculty easy access to the Museum District, neighboring educational institutions, the Texas Medical Center, downtown Houston, two major airports and all of the city's major freeways. More than 9,487 students, along with nearly 1,500 faculty and staff comprise the University's community making it one of the nation's largest Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's). For more information, .sit www.tsu.edu.

Communications Outcome Matrix

**** Media exposure generated by TSU's Office of Communications beginning March – May 2010)***

Media Type	Types of Coverage	Number of Spots	Local/State/National
Radio	Talks Show/News (sports coverage included)	56	Local/State/National
Television	Talk Shows/News/Calendars	54	Local
Television	News Coverage (sports coverage included)	1,223	State/National/International
Magazine	Articles (sports coverage included)	279	Local/National/State
Newspaper	Articles/Feature Stories/Media Hits (including sports related stories, mentions and media hits)	4,364	Local/National
Newspaper	Articles/Media Hits (including sports related stories, mentions and media hits)	1,214	International

I. Media Highlight: (Major News Stories for March – May 2010)

	Number of Hits/Stories	Tone (+/-)
1. Texas Southern University Sports	973	100% (+)
2. Evolution Solar	35	100% (+)
3. Joshua McMackle	7	90%(-) 10%(+)
4. TSU's Who's Who in Black Houston	2	100% (+)
5. Governor Perry Commencement Speaker for TSU	7	100% (+)
6. NASA Extends Contract	3	100% (+)
7. Governor Appoints New Student Regent	2	100% (+)

II. TSU Representation in the National Media Markets: (Top 3 Areas of information distribution for Texas Southern University – Hits/Stories)

1. Texas – 424
2. California – 147
3. Louisiana – 293

II. TSU Representation in the Statewide Media Markets: (Top 3 Areas of information distribution for Texas Southern University – Hits/Stories)

1. Houston - 197
2. Dallas - 120
3. San Antonio – 107

III. TSU comparison with local universities:

University of Houston – 6,890 **total reach – 6,220,700,376**

Rice University – 5,020 **total reach – 4,830,057,727**

Prairie View A&M – 75	total reach – 36,158,760		
Houston Baptist University – 345	total reach – 297,118,475		
TSU Total			
Media Releases/Pitches/Articles/ Sound bites and story mentions U.S. and Global		**7,190**	**Total viewership 3,468,852,080**

All data for this report is courtesy of Meltwater News Service.

Press Release

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY REACHING OUT TO INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI
President to Visit Nigeria, Ethiopia and Tanzania to meet with alumni, students and universities

(Houston, TX 6/15/09) Texas Southern University President John M. Rudley, along with Provost Sunny Ohia and University Advancement Vice President Wendy Adair, will travel to Lagos and Abuja Nigeria between July 5 and 13. U.S. and Nigerian businesses and area alumni are sponsoring the trip and hosting the events in Nigeria. The Chancellor for Southern University in New Orleans, Dr. Victor Ukpolo, will also be part of the outreach tour in Nigeria.

Following the Nigeria visit, President Rudley will extend his Africa stay to meet with government and university dignitaries in Ethiopia and Tanzania. His Ethiopia visit is being hosted by Minister Demeke Mekonnen of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education. The Tanzania meetings are being hosted by Prof. Rwekaza S. Mukandala, Vice Chancellor of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. This summer Texas Southern has 25 students, including 13 members of the internationally recognized Debate Team, studying in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

The purpose of the tour is to re-establish an active Alumni chapter in Nigeria, and in all three countries to meet with government officials and university leaders to develop faculty and student exchanges, to provide information on graduate programs for potential students, and to raise funds for scholarships for Texas Southern students.

Two significant Nigerian alumni, Dr. Kase Lawal, chairman and CEO of CAMAC International Corporation, and Dr. Paul Orhii, Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), will be honored at events in Lagos and Abuja.

Dr. Kase Lawal received his undergraduate degree in chemistry from Texas Southern. He went on to found CAMAC, International Corporation, a global energy services business that specializes in oil and gas exploration and production, crude oil and natural gas trading and in transportation services with headquarters in Houston and offices in Lagos, Nigeria; Johannesburg, South Africa; London, England; and Bogata, Columbia. CAMAC was featured on the 2006 and 2007 *Forbes Magazine* list of the largest privately-owned corporations in America and was designated the 2006 Company of the Year by *Black Enterprise Magazine*. In 2003, Dr. Lawal established a $1 million scholarship endowment at Texas Southern University's Jesse H. Jones School of Business for the Kase and Eileen Lawal Center for Global Trade.

Dr. Paul Orhii is head of the Nigerian government agency responsible for regulating and controlling the manufacture, importation, exportation, advertisement, distribution, sale and use of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, chemicals and prepackaged water. Dr Orhii, a Russian trained doctor, has a Doctorate Degree in Neuro-Pharmacology and holds a Juris Doctor degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University. He has over 20 years of cumulative working experience in the field of medicine in Nigeria and the United States.

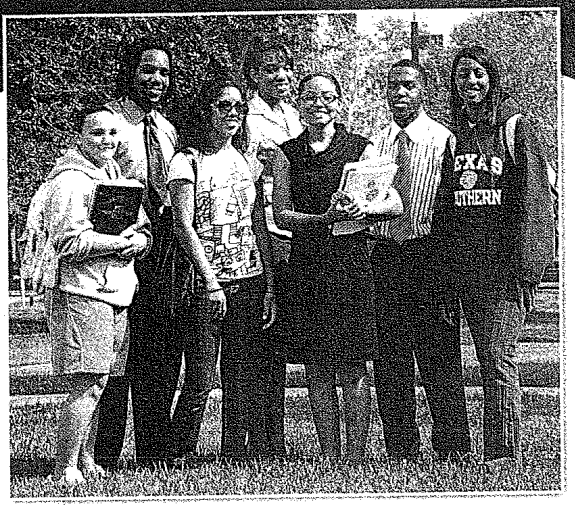
Dr Lawal and Dr. Orhii will be honored as Distinguished International Alumni on July 7 at a reception and dinner in Lagos sponsored by Asco Oil at the Eko Hotel and Suites on Victoria Island and at a reception in Abuja on July 9 sponsored by Fugro Nigeria, Limited at the Protea Hotel Asokoro.

Alumni interested in attending either event should RSVP by e-mail to Wendy Adair at Texas Southern University at adairw@tsu.edu or to Texas Southern alumnus Dr. Kola Ibirogba at kolaibirogba@hoganguards.com.

Sponsors for the Africa Outreach program include Asco Oil, Inc., Fugro Nigeria, Limited, International Consolidated Limited, Allied Energy Plc and Shell Oil Company.

YES TO CHANGE!

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY



Texas Southern University provides comprehensive higher education opportunities in more than 100 undergraduate, graduate and professional areas. As one of the nation's largest HBCU's (Historically Black Colleges & Universities), the university features engaging academic programs, many of which cannot be found anywhere else in the Houston area, or even Texas.

At Texas Southern, our top priority is ensuring that students are prepared for 21st century global competition.

So what are you waiting for? Grab hold of your future. **Be a part of what's happening at TSU Now!**

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TSU looks for online students

Radio host helping university get its share of a fast-growing market

By JEANNIE KEVER
HOUSTON CHRONICLE
Oct. 31, 2010, 11:00PM

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Radio personality Tom Joyner is pushing the nation's historically black colleges and universities to compete with the University of Phoenix and other for-profit schools.

Texas Southern University is one of the first to sign up, offering three master's degrees through a program Joyner launched this fall.

"The outreach Tom Joyner has, it's massive," said TSU Provost Sunny Ohia.

Joyner has raised millions of dollars for the schools through his foundation and regularly promotes them on the nationally syndicated *Tom Joyner Morning Show*, which is broadcast here on KMJQ-FM (102.1).

The initiative, HBCUs Online, aims to give the nation's historically black schools a larger share of the fast-growing market for online degrees, partly by marketing to Joyner's 8 million listeners.

"We want to provide more educational opportunities for African-Americans and, especially, for listeners of Tom Joyner," said Joyner's son, Thomas Joyner Jr., who resigned as president of the Tom Joyner Foundation to run the new initiative.

There are about 100 historically black colleges and universities in the United States, concentrated in the Southeast. Most are private, but a number, including TSU and Prairie View A&M University, are public.

A look at the numbers

Their first wave of competition came as once-segregated schools opened to African-American students. Now it is coming from for-profit schools, many of which offer programs online and allow students to enroll year-round.

The University of Phoenix awards more degrees to African-Americans than any other institution; overall, about 43 percent of students at for-profit schools are members of a minority group.

But only about 25 percent of students who started at a for-profit school in 2001 had earned a degree six years later, according to the U.S. Department of Education, an issue that the elder Joyner has raised as he promotes the project. (Many historically black schools have low graduation rates, too.)

"There's been a lot of concern," the younger Joyner said. "Students want to go to school but are coming out with large debt and not able to get a good job. They're underprepared."

Christina Robinson Grochette, Texas director for the University of Phoenix, said her institution offers free preparation classes for prospective students and suggested all educational options are needed.

"Anytime as a community we can increase access to education and provide new learning opportunities, we support those endeavors," she said in an e-mail.

The HBCU experience

Michael McFrazier, a vice provost at Prairie View A&M, acknowledged the competition between historically black schools and the for-profit sector.

"We all want students," he said. "If students are attracted to the convenience or accessibility of online, then we at the HBCUs have to meet that demand."

Thomas Joyner Jr. met with Prairie View officials in mid-October, and administrators there are considering the venture.

Prairie View offers six degrees through distance education, and McFrazier said they want to do more.

But despite the perception that online is cheaper, McFrazier said it is not. In fact, he said, it's easier to teach large numbers of students in face-to-face classes, because online students ask questions and turn in work at irregular times.

"It's basically 24-7," he said. "You have to yield time for the instructor to post, to answer questions, to grade work."

So expanding online as public universities brace for possible cuts in state funding is complicated.

"The tightening of the belt across the state is preventing a lot of things," he said.

But TSU jumped in.

It and Hampton University, a private school in Virginia, are the first to join the initiative, although the younger Joyner said more will be announced within a few weeks.

For TSU, Ohia said the partnership is a chance to market its programs nationally. It is offering three degrees: an executive MBA, a master's in public administration and a master's degree in education.

It had received about 70 applications through the Joyner initiative by mid-October; Ohia said students who meet TSU's admission standards will start classes in January.

'This didn't just pop up'

Lee Jones, a former executive at Florida State University and the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater, said the

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partnership is an outgrowth of work the elder Joyner has done for decades with historically black universities.

"This didn't just pop up," said Jones, who founded the largest organization of black male Ph.D.s, the Brothers of the Academy, and is president and executive editor of InSpire magazine.

Joyner designates a historically black school each month and encourages supporters to send donations through his foundation. TSU was named in September; donations will be taken through December.

All the schools will face a common challenge: How to transfer the personal experience associated with historically black schools to an online degree?

"We take pride in having our faculty reach out to students," Ohia said. "Even online, we encourage professors to teach the students as if they were on campus."

Students in the executive MBA program meet on campus for an orientation and retreat at the beginning of the two-year program, and again in the summer for an international trip, said Blake Green, coordinator for the program. Last summer, the group went to China to learn about global business operations.

Thomas Joyner Jr. said the initiative will provide additional contacts for students.

"Online students tend to feel isolated," he said. "We don't want them to feel they are in this by themselves."

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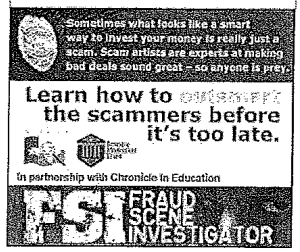

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HEARST *newspapers*

By attracting students from other states, TSU is changing its rep from the outside in

A FAMILY FEELING

MICHAEL PAULSEN : CHRONICLE

HOME: John Rudley has recruited students from around the country since he became president Texas Southern, including some from his hometown of Benton Harbor, Mich.: Davion Crump-Clain, left, Danielle Rudley, Jasmine Moore, Kayla Hurse, Jazsmine Griffin and Denzel Dortch.

JEANNIE KEVER
JSTON CHRONICLE

KAYLA Hurse graduated from her Michigan high school with a 3.9 GPA and a scholarship to Chicago's DePaul University.

But she enrolled at Texas ithern University. She's among a small but wing group of students who were offered nission to more prestigious schools but ıse to come to Houston's Third Ward.

"I like a family feeling," said the 19-year-old Hurse. "I want a network I can turn to, since I am so far from home."

Frustrated by the university's reputation in Houston, where many people are familiar with the financial scandals that forced its former president from office, campus president John Rudley is aggressively courting students from out of state.

"A lot of local kids, when I first got here, they had such a negative opinion of Texas

Please see **TSU,** *Page B5*

TSU: Ocean of Soul clinched the deal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1

Southern," said Rudley, who was named president in 2008. "I couldn't get them to come here."

California and Louisiana have proven especially fertile recruiting territory. But Rudley also pursued students from his hometown of Benton Harbor, Mich., arguing that Texas' largest historically black university had something to offer students from a small town in an economically depressed state.

"I come from the same environment a lot of these kids are in," he said. "With something this valuable, why wouldn't I share it with them?"

Hurse, a sophomore majoring in biology, is one of almost three dozen TSU students from Benton Harbor, population 11,000.

Her mother attended a historically black university, the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, and wanted her daughter to have the same experience.

"She said there's nothing like it, that you truly felt at home. The professors say, 'We're here to help you. We want to see you do well.' "

The 105 historically black colleges and universities in the United States started to educate black students before the civil rights movement opened other doors.

TSU and Prairie View A&M University are the only public, four-year historically black universities in Texas, and the westernmost in the country.

Lured by scholarships

Other historically black schools also are recruiting from outside their geographic regions in an attempt to grow enrollment, said Marybeth Gasman, an associate professor of higher education at the University of Pennsylvania who studies the schools.

Many of the schools, including Texas Southern, have relatively low admission standards as part of a commitment to make higher education more accessible. But Rudley also has launched scholarships and special programs for honors students in order to attract better students.

(A historically black college) believes you should be there. There are a lot of people in leadership and faculty roles that look like you, and that's incredibly empowering."

'Best band in the land'

Davion Crump-McClain, a 17-year-old freshman from Benton Harbor, put it more simply.

He also applied to several other historically black schools, drawn by the idea of "being around people who could understand me," he said.

TSU won out when Crump-McClain, who plays saxophone, successfully auditioned for its Ocean of Soul band.

"I had to come to the best band in the land," he said.

TSU already had a pipeline of sorts from California and Louisiana, which together sent almost 500 students to TSU last fall. Rudley created another in Benton Harbor, where he was a high school basketball star and where he still has family.

He started with his nieces and nephews.

"It wasn't my first choice," said Danielle Rudley, 23, a sophomore at TSU. She started out at Ferris State University in Michigan but faltered, saying she didn't feel school officials cared about her success.

With her uncle at the helm, TSU is different.

"He wants to see me graduate," she said.

Her twin sister, Dana, is a junior at TSU, as is their cousin Gabriel Guidry.

Rudley said Danielle's experience is common.

"Some of the kids had gone off to school, but they were not successful," he said. "I see myself in every one of these kids. I knew education was a must. They need to see that."

Ultimately, Rudley said he wants 25 percent of TSU's enrollment to come from out-of-state and international students. Currently, it's 17 percent.

Gasman suggested his strategy could work.

"It's a really interesting and innovative strategy for the president of Texas South-

African-American News&Issues

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SEPTEMBER 15-21, 2010

Actor Idris Elba visits with TSU's President John M. Rudley. Elba spoke to the students on the first day of classes.

TSU gambles on a sure thing

Getting rid of Texas Southern University's open enrollment controversial but proven to be successful

By TUALA WILLIAMS
African-American News&Issues

When Dr. John Rudley was initially recruited from University of Houston to help guide Texas Southern University out of its rainy circumstances and onto more stable ground, he wasn't certain he wanted to assume the challenge. Dr. Rudley had 21 years of experience in the field, and a few of them had been at TSU. For him, turning the challenged institution around would not be a guessing game.

He knew what it needed and understood the investment he would have to make. In other words, he knew the job was dangerous before he took it. When he shared his concerns with his wife, she responded, "If you're not going to do it, who's going to do it?" He knew she was right.

One of the first things Rudley

See TSU on page 4

STATE | COMMUNITY

TSU

Continued from page 1

did following his appointment as TSU's new president was to change the admission status from being an "open" school to being "closed." This dropped the school's enrollment from around 11,000 to around 9,500.

"That's a good thing," Rudley says, "Because we had about 2,000 people who had no intention of graduating." Among those dropped from the rolls were 400 students who had accumulated all "Fs." It was surmised by administration that the students had been on the rolls at TSU, but not attending their classes.

The move was controversial for many, who are accustomed to HBCUs accepting all applicants. The purpose of open admissions is to ensure that everyone who wants to go to college has the opportunity to go. It's a program that Rudley supports—just not at TSU. According to him, some students are better off attending community colleges, which are better equipped to meet the needs of people who require a little more help. "When they finish in about two more years, then they're ripe to come to Texas Southern," he said.

Retired educator and TSU Alumnus Mary Jefferson says she is in support of the changes he is making, including removing the school's open enrollment status. "If our students have done an adequate job and really put their minds into moving into an educational flow and take advantage of the opportunities that are available to us, they will be better prepared and more competitive as they enter into the educational system," she said.

In a previous interview with a local daily, Rudley explained that when students with GEDs are accepted, they come without the preparation and discipline other students who have been accepted have.

The consequences for the university and its students are far reaching. Students not yet ready for the rigorous disciplines of college life place a pull on a school's resources, creating a hindrance for students who have prepared themselves for higher education. A recent study that measures workforce readiness according to employers, reported that only 70 percent of two and four year college graduates and a little over 40 percent of high school graduates are overall workforce ready.

The change seems to be working. The first year following the adoption of the school's new status, only 100 students transferred from community college to TSU. However, this year, TSU welcomed 1,100 transfers, students who had developed the knowledge, discipline and study habits necessary to keep pace with a more challenging learning environment necessary for a university to produce professionals ready to join the workforce. Statistically, students who transfer to universities from community colleges have a higher graduation rate than those who enroll in universities as first time freshmen.

Moving to closed admissions, meaning students had to qualify, also meant reduced numbers of students. The solution? A new honors college.

TSU has 11 colleges, among those is an Honors College, created to attract students with a 3.6 GPA or greater. "If you're going to reduce the number of low performing students, you have to start pursuing students who have higher [GPAs]."

The college, established during th 2009 fall semester, was named aft Dr. Thomas H. Freeman. Accordi to the school's website, the missio was to "provide a highly motivate high-achieving and intellectually curious student the opportunity to expand their world views under the guidance of an academically rigorous and experientially-centered honors curriculum. The total program seeks to enhance the educational experiences of studen by offering unique learning experi ences, tailored to develop graduat who are well equipped to positive impact the community within the state of Texas and beyond. The concepts of the scholarship, community involvement, leadership, ethical/moral principles and cultur sensitivity are strongly emphasize and instilled in Freeman Honors College graduates."

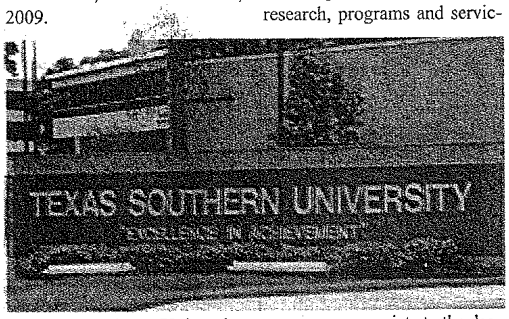
In the long run, it is believed that the transition from an open to closed enrollment process will go a long way toward improving boti the school's quality of education a well it's graduation rate.

Next week Dr. Rudley talks abou the progress and direction of TSU.

HOUSTON *Forward Times • September 30 - October 6, 2009*

"We Love & Support TSU Month"

The Texas Southern University Bayou Bend Alumni & Ex- Students Association, Inc. (Friends & Supporters) have decided **October, 2009** as **"We Love & Support TSU Month"** in conjunction with our traditional homecoming celebration, October 25-31, 2009.



Texas Southern University has a history that dates back to 1927, Houston Jr. College For Negroes; 1947, Texas State University For Negroes and in 1951 the name changed to Texas Southern University. In 1973 the 63rd Legislature declared Texas Southern University as a special purpose institution of higher education for urban programming, and shall provide instruction, research, programs and services as are appropriate to the designation. Presently, Dr. John M. Rudley is serving as the eleventh president and Glenn Lewis is the Chairman of the Board of Regents.

TSU's current academic curriculum offers over 140 baccalaurette, masters and doctoral degree programs in ten schools and colleges. The University has over two hundred thousand graduates, ex-students, friends,

TSU - Page 4A

TSU from front

and supporters. Some of the more prominent graduates include Congress persons, the late Barbara Jordan, Mickey Leland; Judges, the late Henry Doyle, Andrew Jefferson, Carl Walker, Cecil Bush; Pharmacist Al Hopkins; former Congressman Craig Washing-ton; Congressman Al Green; State Senator Rodney Ellis; State Representatives Alma Allen, Harold Dutton, Jr., Al Edwards, Ruth Jones McClendon, Senfronia Thompson and Joe Deshotel; County Commissioners El Franco Lee and Sylvia Garcia; City Councilmembers Wanda Adams, Ron Green, Jarvis Johnson; Port Commissioner Kase Lawal; former City Attorneys Otis King, Benjamin Hall and Anthony Hall; Ulyssea W. Watkins, D.; Rancher/Pharmacist Lewis Jackson; Lawrence Boze, Dr. Robert Gilmore; Judges Alice Bonner, Bonnie Fitch, Ken Hoyt, Ruben Guerrero, Zinetta Burney; Constable May Walker; and in the area of Athletics, Coach Andy Rice, Michael Strahan, Tony Wyllie, Kenney Burrough; Yolanda Adams, National Artist, TSU's pride and joy and a host of others.

During the month of October TSU graduates, ex-students, friends, and supporters and asked to give of their **"Time, Talents and Treasures"** to the many programs, colleges and schools at the University. For additional information, call (713) 529-1636.

Education

TSU Enrollment increases, focus is on retention rate

Texas Southern University can boast a 5.23 percent (5.3%) increase in enrollment for fall 2009, according to reports from TSU's Enrollment Management Office. From fall 2008 to fall 2009, TSU enrolled nearly 500 additional students, 476 to be exact. The largest gain for the university was in the retention of first-time freshmen students.

TSU has reported a 67 percent (67%) retention rate, an eight percent (8%) increase over last fall. TSU has had a 57 percent (57%) increase in re-admits according to records released by the university which means a total 519 students who had attended TSU but have been away for one or more years, returned to the campus. This number indicates an increase of 188 students. First time transfer students accounted for another increase of 33.4 percent (33.4%), reflecting an increase of 762 from 571 for a total increase of 191 first-time transfer students.

No one is more excited about TSU's promising numbers than Dr. James Douglas, Executive Vice President, who heads TSU's Urban Academic Village initiative. "I am excited about the fact that we were able to retain more students this year," states Douglas. "One of the things our studies reveal is that we would never be able to increase our graduation rate, until we improve our retention rate. So we are putting our resources into assuring that our students stay in school and graduate."

Douglas says one thing that added to their success has been a TSU instituted intervention program, complete with mentors and motivational speakers. "We believe in this method so much until we are planning to continue this aspect of the program next year and will use this same effort as students enter their sophomore year." Douglas believes if the same results are achieved during the students sophomore year when students have obtained 60 college credit hours, then they will realize that they're at the halfway mark of completing their goal of obtaining a college degree. "I believe once our students reach that 60-hours threshold, they're going to be excited about graduating. This will greatly improve our graduation rate," Douglas insists.

Douglas believes the class of new freshmen that entered this fall is a strong class. Given the summer program and having met the admission standards, he's looking for great things to happen with this class of new and returning freshmen. He thanks Richard Johnson and his team for doing a great job last year.

TSU has enrolled more than 200 honor students to its newly announced Honors College.

President John Rudley | TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

(continued from pg.1)

PRESIDENT RUDLEY'S AGENDA TAKES SHAPE

President John Rudley has established a list of goals to reach in order to become, in his words, "one of the best public urban serving institutions of higher education." The major goals include (1) "raising admissions and academic standards; (2) establishing new fiscal policies and procedures; and (3) receiving state-approval for a reorganization plan" which includes $12.5 million for operations and $13.6 million for academic and facility improvements. (4) TSU will also continue its community collaborations.

A major goal on President Rudley's agenda is to raise TSU's academic standards and student achievement. President Rudley is considering changing TSU's Open Enrollment policy in order to improve academic performance. President Rudley has modified TSU's admissions policy because he believes that TSU's Open Enrollment Policy has contributed to TSU's low graduation rate - only 16 percent of its students graduate in 5 years compared to 55 percent statewide. TSU's website indicates that it still maintains an Open Enrollment Policy but that the University requires that applicants take the American College Test (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test and otherwise "demonstrate ability to perform successfully at the college level." Whereas, in the past, students could be admitted with a GED and a 1.8 GPA, as of Fall 2008, students need a 2.0 GPA to get in. As a result of the new standards, TSU did notice a twenty percent drop in enrollment. But the drop was less than expected and the President's administration expects that its enrollment numbers and applicant percentages will stabilize by next Fall.

President Rudley believes that there are potential students who meet these standards and would like to attend TSU. To attract them, he has spearheaded several initiatives to make sure that students succeed upon enrollment. Last month, TSU announced an Alumni Giving Campaign to raise funds for Presidential Leadership Scholarships.

New academic accomplishments show TSU is on track to reach these goals. In November, the University's Band, the "Ocean of Soul" won $20,000 for TSU's music scholarship programs and a trip to Atlanta to compete against nine other HBCU marching bands at the 2009 Invitational Showcase, the Annual Honda Battle of the Bands on January 24, 2009 at the Georgia Dome.

President John M. Rudley

To President Rudley, such achievements are nothing new. "This is the university that produced U.S. Reps. Barbara Jordan and George (Mickey) Leland and NFL player Michael Strahan . . . students can go to the pharmacy program, or they can go to the law school. We have a wonderful education college here. One of the strengths of Texas Southern is the line-up of quality programs. We have the full breadth: public affairs, communications and business. You name it."

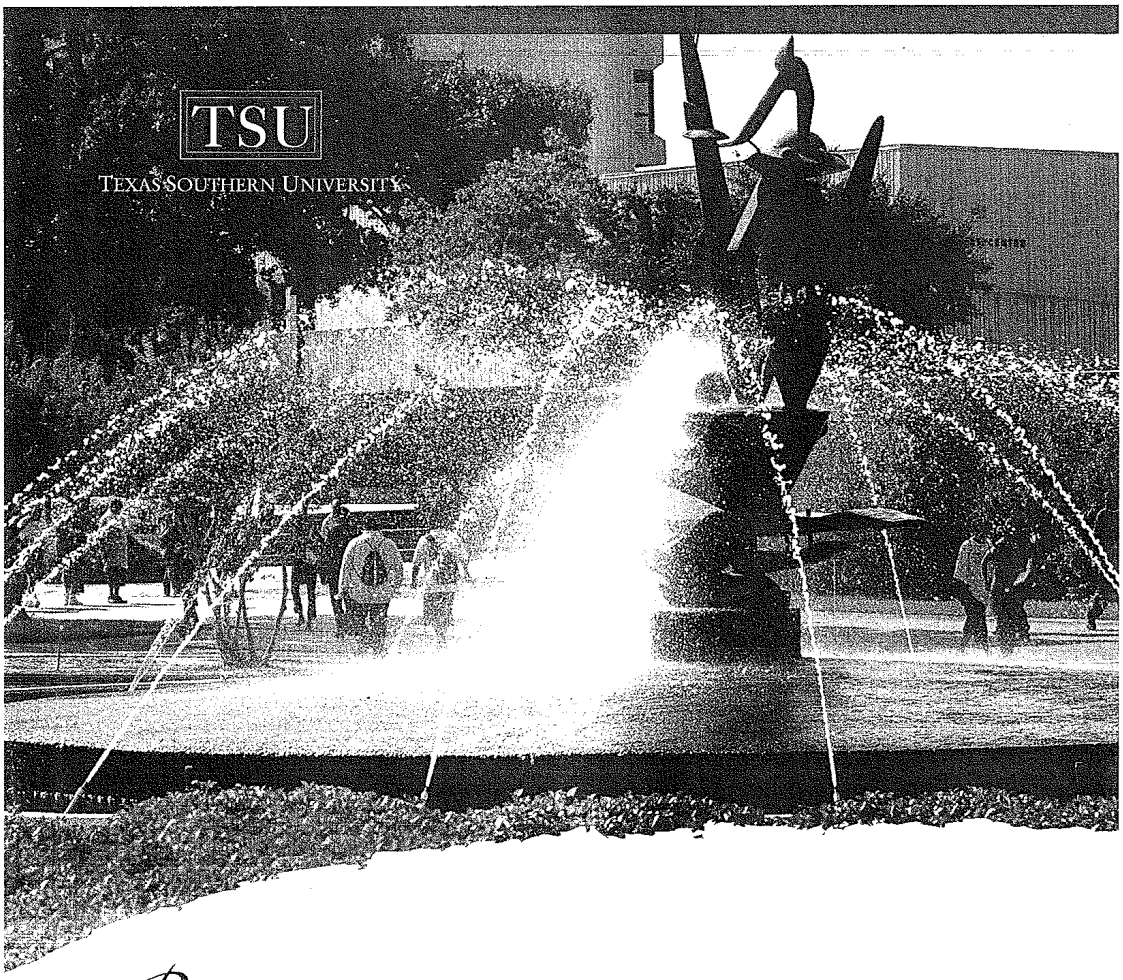
President Rudley also is determined to prove TSU's "strength in handling university governance and fiscal integrity so that the University can be removed from the probation status placed by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in 2007. President Rudley sees a light at the end of the tunnel. "We can produce financial statements [for the SACS], and we will make sure that we do that on time . . . we can get the stain of the probation off our backs. That's what my expertise is, finance. Certainly, it's a solvable problem."

Since his investiture, SACS has not cited TSU for any violations of university governance requirements. According to President Rudley, TSU has made great strides in providing SACS with the financial records, reports and audits to put TSU on track to be removed from probation status by June 2009. In fact, President Rudley has set up fiscal processes and procedures for regents and administrators.

According to President Rudley, TSU's ability to use its own reserve funds to commence repairs from the $16 million in damages that TSU sustained from Hurricane Ike is evidence of TSU's financial and fiscal comeback.

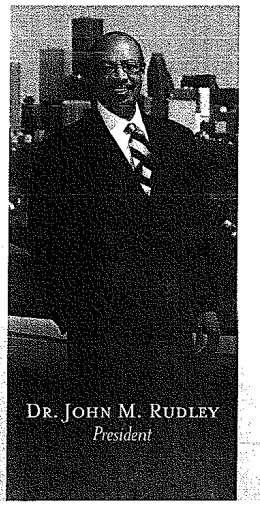
President Rudley has also achieved the major goal of implementing his state improved reorganization plan. He as hired a new team of provosts, vice presidents and other leading administrators to continue TSU on its new path.

TSU continues to hosts several community forums and other programs for the community at large. This past October, its Thurgood Marshall School of Law, for example, recently hosted a highly attended Indigent Defense Symposium in which several criminal defense lawyers, judges and elected officials attended.



A *Renaissance* OF EXCELLENCE

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY HAS EMBARKED ON A HISTORIC TRANSFORMATION TO MOVE THE INSTITUTION INTO THE FOREGROUND OF MAJOR URBAN-SERVING UNIVERSITIES. THE TSU BOARD OF REGENTS LAUNCHED THE NEW DIRECTION WITH THE HIRING OF DR. JOHN M. RUDLEY IN FEBRUARY 2008. TODAY, A DRAMATIC RENAISSANCE IS OCCURRING AT TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY. THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS ARE CHANGING, AND THE OUTSTANDING TRADITIONS AND POSITIVE LEGACIES OF TEXAS SOUTHERN ARE BEING RENEWED.



DR. JOHN M. RUDLEY
President

Creating Legacies – One Student at a Time

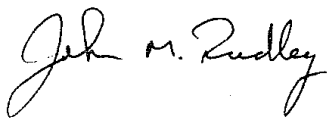
There is a long history of legacy students at American colleges and universities, particularly Ivy League schools. This practice of sons and daughters, nieces and nephews, and grandchildren following in the educational footsteps of their predecessors is equally rooted in the traditions of our nation's Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs), and most especially Texas Southern University.

Texas Southern legacies speak not only to strong familial customs but a multi-generational satisfaction in the collegiate experience gained at Texas Southern, and an appreciation for the opportunities a TSU education affords. During 2009, Texas Southern University and its many legacy students provided numerous examples of the benefits of attending an HBCU. Concomitantly, the University showcased an expansion of services, modalities and constituencies during 2009 to firmly position Texas Southern as an educational institution fully capable of preparing its students and graduates for successful competition in today's and tomorrow's expanding global marketplace.

Enhanced admissions standards coupled with expanded academic offerings and improved retention and graduation rates have allowed Texas Southern University to continue the HBCU tradition of providing a high return on educational investment. Texas Southern students are taking advantage of campus opportunities to reach for the stars. More and more of our students, like those whose experiment accompanied NASA's November 2009 STS-129 Space Shuttle mission, are finding at TSU a high quality education for a comparatively low cost.

In addition, Texas Southern, in true HBCU fashion, has become ground zero for diversity, the institutional trait most referred to by social forecasters as critical to 21st century success. Graduate schools and employers seeking to diversify their institutions look to HBCUs first. Our legacies and their parents often speak of the high job placement rate of HBCU graduates as evidenced by TSU's College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences graduates. Yet, in 2009 Texas Southern University expanded upon the existing diversity paradigm by enhancing its ability to recruit and attract students of all ethnicities and nationalities. Already boasting one of the state's most diverse student and faculty populations, TSU now impacts with its increased Latino student population the growth of the Latino middle class, as it did in the 1960s and 1970s for the African American community.

We are proud of our legacies. Their presence sends a powerful message of the ongoing impact of Texas Southern University. TSU is preparing these legacies, as well as students beginning new legacies of their own, for the real world of diverse populations not just in the U.S., but also globally. In 2009 this impact was evidenced in every facet of university operations. The information within the 2009 Annual Report will bear out this reality and expound upon the many initiatives at Texas Southern attracting students following in their elders' footsteps and those charting new educational paths of their own. We are fully committed to improving upon our past successes to ensure continued institutional growth. And we are confident that today's legacy students will do their part, as their elders before them, to create an even bolder institutional legacy for Texas Southern University.



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News

One Month After Hurricane Katrina Relief Efforts At Xavier University Continue

Share

Moment of Silence Planned for Friday

09/28/05

As the one month anniversary of Hurricane Katrina slamming into the Louisiana and Mississippi shorelines approaches, the Xavier University family continues its relief efforts for victims of the hurricane.
The Xavier community will join other local colleges and universities to observe a moment of silence on Friday, September 30 at noon, in compassion for the people affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA) remains closed, however, XULA administrator Carl Findorff, was on the Xavier Cincinnati campus recently. He worked with Dorinda Giles, associate vice president for information systems and services and her staff. Together they were able to get the XULA website back on line. Xavier Cincinnati's Information Systems and Services is now hosting XULA's website.

Displaced Students

The Student Government Association (SGA) officially welcomed the new students with a get together on Friday, September 9. Information packets were handed out and the Cincinnati Reds donated tickets to a game. A welcome barbeque was held on Friday, September 16.

Approximately 27 students from Tulane, Xavier University of Louisiana and Loyola New Orleans, are now attending classes at Xavier. Eleven of the students are living on campus. The others are living with their families or relatives in the Cincinnati area.

They range from freshman to graduate students and are majoring in everything from music education to pre-med. Thanks to student senator Sara Thomas, the students received a $30 gift card from Staples. SGA is also organizing a mentoring program for the displaced students. Current Xavier students will 'buddy' up with a 'new' student.

Xavier Students

Xavier students continue on a number of fronts to help hurricane victims, evacuees and animals. They are also doing what they can to help rebuild the devastated region.

Members of the Literacy Club, which is sponsored by McDonald Library, are collecting children's books. This is in cooperation with the Greater Cincinnati Library Consortium. Students, faculty and staff are being asked to donate new or slightly used children's books that will be sent to schools or libraries in New Orleans.

Advocates for Animals at Xavier are collecting donations for animal victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Collections are being made in the dorms, in the Village and at the Gallagher Student Center. Donations are being made to St. Francis Animal Sanctuary in Tylertown, MS.

On Saturday, October 15, the music department will present a concert for hurricane relief. It will be free to attend the concert, but donations will be accepted. The performance is at Bellarmine Chapel at 7:30 p.m. Several students displaced from Loyola will take part in the concert.

The International Student Society held it annual Latin Dance with Salsa Caliente on Friday, September 23. The event raised more than $1,000 for the American Red Cross.

The Black Student Association finished its fundraising efforts and collected just over $1600 for hurricane relief.

The Student Activities Council hosted a 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. Radio station The Wiz was at the game. Donations were accepted for hurricane relief.

20-30 volunteers from Dr. Nancy Bertaux's human resources classes are in training at the Super Job Center on Central Parkway. The center helps with job training and counseling to Hamilton County residents. The center is gearing up for people displaced from the hurricanes who may need such services. The students will help with intake and run workshops. The Super Job Center is supported by the Workforce Investment Act.

The Student Government Association (SGA) has been in contact with several different organizations, including the American Red Cross and Habitat for Humanity.

SGA is also working Alternative Breaks on a summer break trip for two weeks. Alternative Breaks is a student organization which provides service opportunities in various communities in the United States and abroad during spring break and other times of the year. The trip may involve Xavier University Cincinnati students working at Xavier University of Louisiana. SGA administrative vice president Omari Aarons says they've also received inquires regarding a spring break trip from student governments at other Jesuit colleges and universities.

Bellarmine Chapel

Bellarmine Chapel is sponsoring a family from the hurricane area in Louisiana. The family came to Cincinnati on chartered buses the parishioners helped secure with City Councilman Smitherman's family. The Morgan family, parents Maurice and Monica with two-year-old son Donte and 10 month-old daughter Mya, has found an apartment. The parish is working with them to set up their new household and prepare them for their first winter.

A National Day of Prayer was proclaimed for Friday, September 16, in remembrance of the victims of the hurricane. The University community joined in prayer at the noon Mass at Bellarmine.

Donations

In the spirit of compassion, Xavier University announced on Tuesday, September 6, that it is donating 10 percent of annual fund gifts received now through December to help rebuild and repair the damage created by Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, the donations are going to help Loyola University, a fellow Catholic, Jesuit University in New Orleans. Loyola was forced to close its campus and cancel its academic semester as a result of the hurricane.

Xavier began collecting for the effort with its phonathon campaign. Anyone wishing to contribute to the annual fund, and help Loyola University New Orleans in the process, may do on line at www.xu.edu/giving/opportunities/annual.htm or by e-mailing gifts@xavier.edu.

Xavier faculty and staff continue to make donations to several organizations including the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities and the Humane Society.

For more information contact Debora Del Valle at 513-745-3925.

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XAVIER UNIVERSITY
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Students Return to Louisiana's Xavier University

January 17, 2006 text size A A A

Thousands of students return to Xavier University in Louisiana for the first time since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. The university was forced to close its doors for the fall semester after Katrina. Regina McCutcheon, president of Xavier's student government association, talks about the first day of classes.

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MELISSA BLOCK, host:

In New Orleans, college students went back to class today for the first time since Hurricane Katrina at Tulane, Xavier and Southern universities. These colleges have changed. Faculty positions have been slashed, academic programs eliminated and for some students housing is now in a hotel room or on a cruise ship. Xavier University is the country's only historically black and Catholic university, almost every building on campus was damaged by the flooding. About three-quarters of Xavier's student population has returned, 3,100 out of more than 4,000. We reached Regina McCutcheon at the student services office after her first day of class. She's a senior from Baton Rouge and president of Xavier's Student Government Association.

Ms. REGINA McCUTCHEON (President, Xavier University, Student Government Association): Unfortunately, it was raining so that kind of dampened the mood, but, you know, even though it was raining a lot of students were excited to see each other again. We greeted each other. Basically, we jus resumed where we left off from last semester.

BLOCK: Now how had you started classes when Katrina hit?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Actually, yes, we had. I think we had been into about a week of school.

BLOCK: Uh-huh. So you're trying to sort of just pick up where you left off?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Right. So basically, this is our second week of school. People have described it as `We're returning from a very long weekend.' So...

BLOCK: Hmm. Well, that's one way of looking at it, I guess, yeah.

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Yes, ma'am.

BLOCK: When you walked around the campus there, I'm assuming that there are lots of signs of what happened. Can you tell me what it looks like?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Actually it doesn't look exactly the same; however, the historical buildings are fine--they look fine from the outside. And we have some FEMA trailers that are on campus now.

BLOCK: Who's living in the FEMA trailers?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Some of our faculty and staff.

BLOCK: Uh-huh, not the students?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Not the students. Students are living in residence halls or near and around the university in, you know, different apartments, etc.

BLOCK: So has there been a little dislocation then of the student population, too?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Naturally it--there has been. You know, some students chose not to return. So we have most of our students--most of our students have returned. Most of those students are living on campus in our residence halls.

BLOCK: Tell me about your first moment walking into class today. Did it feel momentous in some way?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: It felt like we, you know, had overcome a major obstacle. Actually, the class that I entered was one of my old classes and there was new flooring, you know, new paint and it actually looked great. The teacher is a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament and she began class with a prayer, and that prayer motivated students to prepare themselves academically for the upcoming school year. So, you know, it felt great to be back at home and to be back learning where we're used to learning.

BLOCK: What was the prayer?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Basically, she prayed for the university. She prayed for the students' continued success. She prayed over the losses that we've all experienced. And she prayed basically just for the preservation of our university and for our students to continue to do well.

BLOCK: Regina, what did you do in the months that you couldn't go back to Xavier after Katrina hit?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: I attended Louisiana State University. I'm originally from Baton Rouge so I chose to go there and get a different university experience.

BLOCK: Was there any point over the last four and a half or so months that you thought, `Maybe Xavier just is not where I need to go back? Maybe I should be thinking about someplace else?'

Ms. McCUTCHEON: Oh, no. The thought of attending another university permanently never crossed my mind. There are a lot of students who share the same beliefs that I have, and that's why so many of our students chose to come back. The family atmosphere here, the love. You know, we had to come back and we had to have our school get back on its feet.

BLOCK: Does it seem to you that you're now part of a pretty dramatically changed institution, smaller and different from what it was?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: I mean, we're definitely a part of a changed institution; however, our perception determines our possibilities. So even though, you know, our school has undergone some changes, the outcome of those changes are going to be greater than they were before. It's something that is teaching us patience. It's teaching us how to come together and to actually bring other people in the community together. And it's teaching us also how to work together and how to continue to be optimistic through negative situations.

BLOCK: Regina, what are your plans after you graduate?

Ms. McCUTCHEON: I will be attending Tulane Medical School. I'm going to be starting, I believe, on August 4th. So I'll be leaving Xavier, going straight to Tulane.

BLOCK: Well, best of luck to you and welcome back to class.

Ms. McCUTCHEON: OK, thank you very much.

BLOCK: That's Regina McCutcheon, a senior at Xavier University in New Orleans, talking with us on the first day that classes resumed after Hurricane Katrina.

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The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release August 29, 2010

Remarks by the President on the Fifth Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana

Xavier University
New Orleans, Louisiana

1:50 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, everybody. It is good to be back. (Applause.) It is good to be back.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's good to have you back!

THE PRESIDENT: I'm glad. (Laughter.) And due to popular demand, I decided to bring the First Lady down here. (Applause.)

We have just an extraordinary number of dedicated public servants who are here. If you will be patient with me, I want to make sure that all of them are acknowledged. First of all, you've got the governor of the great state of Louisiana -- Bobby Jindal is here. (Applause.) We have the outstanding mayor of New Orleans, Mitch Landrieu. (Applause.) We have the better looking and younger senator from Louisiana, Mary Landrieu. (Applause.)

I believe that Senator David Vitter is here. David -- right here. (Applause.) We have -- hold on a second now -- we've got Congressman Joe Cao is here. (Applause.) Congressman Charlie Melancon is here. (Applause.) Congressman Steve Scalise is here. (Applause.)

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, who has been working tirelessly down here in Louisiana, Shaun Donovan. (Applause.) We've got our EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson here -- homegirl. (Applause.) Administrator of FEMA Craig Fugate is here. (Applause.) The person who's heading up our community service efforts all across the country -- Patrick Corvington is here. (Applause.) Louisiana's own Regina Benjamin, the Surgeon General -- (applause) -- a Xavier grad, I might add. (Applause.) We are very proud to have all of these terrific public servants here.

It is wonderful to be back in New Orleans, and it is a great honor --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We love you!

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't see you!

THE PRESIDENT: It is a great honor -- (laughter) -- you can see me now? (Laughter.) Okay. It is a great honor to be back at Xavier University. (Applause.) And I -- it's just inspiring to spend time with people who've demonstrated what it means to persevere in the face of tragedy, to rebuild in the face of ruin.

I'm grateful to Jade for her introduction, and congratulate you on being crowned Miss Xavier. (Applause.) I hope everybody heard during the introduction she was a junior at Ben Franklin High School five years ago when the storm came. And after Katrina, Ben Franklin High was terribly damaged by wind and water. Millions of dollars were needed to rebuild the school. Many feared it would take years to reopen -- if it could be reopened at all.

But something remarkable happened. Parents, teachers, students, volunteers, they all got to work making repairs. And donations came in from across New Orleans and around the world. And soon, those silent and darkened corridors, they were bright and they were filled with the sounds of young men and women, including Jade, who were going back to class. And then Jade committed to Xavier, a university that likewise refused to succumb to despair. So Jade, like so many students here at this university, embody hope. That sense of hope in difficult times, that's what I came to talk about today.

It's been five years since Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast. There's no need to dwell on what you experienced and what the world witnessed. We all remember it keenly: water pouring through broken levees; mothers holding their children above the waterline; people stranded on rooftops begging for help; bodies lying in the streets of a great American city. It was a natural disaster but also a manmade catastrophe -- a shameful breakdown in government that left countless men, and women, and children abandoned and alone.

WATCH THE VIDEO

August 29, 2010 12:19 PM
A Commitment to Restoring New Orleans

BLOG POSTS ON THIS ISSUE

May 02, 2011 2:27 PM EDT
President Obama Presents Medal of Honor: "We're Reminded That We Are Fortunate to Have Americans Who Dedicate Their Lives to Protecting Ours"

On a day when America is honoring those who are serving now and their tremendous accomplishments for our national security, the President recognizes two heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Korean War decades ago.

May 02, 2011 1:55 PM EDT
The 'America's Next Top Energy Innovator' Challenge Begins Today
Starting today and until December 15, start-up companies can apply for one of the Department of Energy's thousands of unlicensed patents for greatly reduced cost and paperwork.

May 02, 2011 1:00 PM EDT
The Results Are In
Domestic Policy Director Melody Barnes announced the top three finalists in the Race to the Top Commencement Challenge.

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And shortly after the storm, I came down to Houston to spend time with some of the folks who had taken shelter there. And I'll never forget what one woman told me. She said, "We had nothing before the hurricane. And now we've got less than nothing."

In the years that followed, New Orleans could have remained a symbol of destruction and decay; of a storm that came and the inadequate response that followed. It was not hard to imagine a day when we'd tell our children that a once vibrant and wonderful city had been laid low by indifference and neglect. But that's not what happened. It's not what happened at Ben Franklin. It's not what happened here at Xavier. It's not what happened across New Orleans and across the Gulf Coast. (Applause.) Instead this city has become a symbol of resilience and of community and of the fundamental responsibility that we have to one another.

And we see that here at Xavier. Less than a month after the storm struck, amidst debris and flood-damaged buildings, President Francis promised that this university would reopen in a matter of months. (Applause.) Some said he was crazy. Some said it couldn't happen. But they didn't count on what happens when one force of nature meets another. (Laughter.) And by January -- four months later -- class was in session. Less than a year after the storm, I had the privilege of delivering a commencement address to the largest graduating class in Xavier's history. That is a symbol of what New Orleans is all about. (Applause.)

We see New Orleans in the efforts of Joycelyn Heintz, who's here today. Katrina left her house 14 feet underwater. But after volunteers helped her rebuild, she joined AmeriCorps to serve the community herself -- part of a wave of AmeriCorps members who've been critical to the rebirth of this city and the rebuilding of this region. (Applause.) So today, she manages a local center for mental health and wellness.

We see the symbol that this city has become in the St. Bernard Project, whose founder Liz McCartney is with us. (Applause.) This endeavor has drawn volunteers from across the country to rebuild hundreds of homes throughout St. Bernard Parish and the Lower Ninth Ward.

I've seen the sense of purpose people felt after the storm when I visited Musicians' Village in the Ninth Ward back in 2006. Volunteers were not only constructing houses; they were coming together to preserve the culture of music and art that's part of the soul of this city -- and the soul of this country. And today, more than 70 homes are complete, and construction is underway on the Ellis Marsalis Center for Music. (Applause.)

We see the dedication to the community in the efforts of Xavier grad Dr. Regina Benjamin, who mortgaged her home, maxed out her credit cards so she could reopen her Bayou la Batre clinic to care for victims of the storm -- and who is now our nation's Surgeon General. (Applause.)

And we see resilience and hope exemplified by students at Carver High School, who have helped to raise more than a million dollars to build a new community track and football field -- their "Field of Dreams" -- for the Ninth Ward. (Applause.)

So because of all of you -- all the advocates, all the organizers who are here today, folks standing behind me who've worked so hard, who never gave up hope -- you are all leading the way toward a better future for this city with innovative approaches to fight poverty and improve health care, reduce crime, and create opportunities for young people. Because of you, New Orleans is coming back. (Applause.)

And I just came from Parkway Bakery and Tavern. (Applause.) Five years ago, the storm nearly destroyed that neighborhood institution. I saw the pictures. Now they're open, business is booming, and that's some good eats. (Laughter.) I had the shrimp po'boy and some of the gumbo. (Applause.) But I skipped the bread pudding because I thought I might fall asleep while I was speaking. (Laughter.) But I've got it saved for later. (Laughter.)

Five years ago, many questioned whether people could ever return to this city. Today, New Orleans is one of the fastest growing cities in America, with a big new surge in small businesses. Five years ago, the Saints had to play every game on the road because of the damage to the Superdome. Two weeks ago, we welcomed the Saints to the White House as Super Bowl champions. (Applause.) There was also food associated with that. (Laughter.) We marked the occasion with a 30-foot po'boy made with shrimps and oysters from the Gulf. (Applause.) And you'll be pleased to know there were no leftovers. (Laughter.)

Now, I don't have to tell you that there are still too many vacant and overgrown lots. There are still too many students attending classes in trailers. There are still too many people unable to find work. And there are still too many New Orleanians, folks who haven't been able to come home. So while an incredible amount of progress has been made, on this fifth anniversary, I wanted to come here and tell the people of this city directly: My administration is going to stand with you -- and fight alongside you -- until the job is done. (Applause.) Until New Orleans is all the way back, all the way. (Applause.)

When I took office, I directed my Cabinet to redouble our efforts, to put an end to the turf wars between agencies, to cut the red tape and cut the bureaucracy. (Applause.) I wanted to make sure that the federal government was a partner -- not an obstacle -- to recovery here in the Gulf Coast. And members of my Cabinet -- including EPA administrator, Lisa Jackson, who grew up in Pontchartrain Park -- (applause) -- they have come down here dozens of times. Shaun Donovan has come down here dozens of times. This is not just to make appearances. It's not just to get photo ops. They came down here to listen and to learn and make real the changes that were necessary so that government was actually working for you.

So for example, efforts to rebuild schools and hospitals, to repair damaged roads and bridges, to get people back to their homes -- they were tied up for years in a tangle of disagreements and byzantine rules. So when I took office, working with your outstanding delegation, particularly Senator Mary Landrieu, we put in place a new way of resolving disputes. (Applause.) We put in place a new way of resolving disputes so that funds set aside for rebuilding efforts actually went toward rebuilding efforts. And as a result, more than 170 projects are getting underway -- work on firehouses, and police stations, and roads, and sewer systems, and health clinics, and libraries, and universities.

We're tackling the corruption and inefficiency that has long plagued the New Orleans Housing Authority. We're helping homeowners rebuild and making it easier for renters to find affordable options. And we're helping people to move out of temporary homes. You know, when I took office, more than three years after the storm, tens of thousands of families were still stuck in disaster housing -- many still living in small trailers that had been provided by FEMA. We were spending huge sums of money on temporary shelters when we knew it would be better for families, and less costly for taxpayers, to help people get into affordable, stable, and more permanent housing. So we've helped make it possible for people to find those homes, and we've dramatically reduced the number of families in emergency housing.

On the health care front, as a candidate for President, I pledged to make sure we were helping New Orleans recruit doctors and nurses, and rebuild medical facilities -- including a new veterans hospital. (Applause.) Well, we have resolved a long-standing dispute -- one that had tied up hundreds of millions of dollars -- to fund the replacement for Charity Hospital. And in June, Veterans Secretary Ric Shinseki came to New Orleans for the groundbreaking of that new VA hospital.

In education, we've made strides as well. As you know, schools in New Orleans were falling behind long before Katrina. But in the years since the storm, a lot of public schools opened themselves up to innovation and to reform. And as a result, we're actually seeing rising achievement, and New Orleans is becoming a model of innovation for the nation. This is yet another sign that you're not just rebuilding -- you're rebuilding stronger than before. Just this Friday, my administration announced a final agreement on $1.8 billion dollars for Orleans Parish schools. (Applause.) This is money that had been locked up for years, but now it's freed up so folks here can determine best how to restore the school system.

And in a city that's known too much violence, that's seen too many young people lost to drugs and criminal activity, we've got a Justice Department that's committed to working with New Orleans to fight the scourge of violent crime, and to weed out corruption in the police force, and to ensure the criminal justice system works for everyone in this city. (Applause.) And I want everybody to hear -- to know and to hear me thank Mitch Landrieu, your new mayor, for his commitment to that partnership. (Applause.)

Now, even as we continue our recovery efforts, we're also focusing on preparing for future threats so that there is never another disaster like Katrina. The largest civil works project in American history is underway to build a fortified levee system. And as I -- just as I pledged as a candidate, we're going to finish this system by next year so that this city is protected against a 100-year storm. We should not be playing Russian roulette every hurricane season. (Applause.) And we're also working to restore protective wetlands and natural barriers that were not only damaged by Katrina -- were not just damaged by Katrina but had been rapidly disappearing for decades.

In Washington, we are restoring competence and accountability. I am proud that my FEMA Director, Craig Fugate, has 25 years of experience in disaster management in Florida. (Applause.) He came from Florida, a state that has known its share of hurricanes. We've put together a group led by Secretary Donovan and Secretary Napolitano to look at disaster recovery across the country. We're improving coordination on the ground, and modernizing emergency communications, helping families plan for a crisis. And we're putting in place reforms so that never again in America is somebody left behind in a disaster because they're living with a disability or because they're elderly or because they're infirmed. That will not happen again. (Applause.)

Finally, even as you've been buffeted by Katrina and Rita, even as you've been impacted by the broader recession that has devastated communities across the country, in recent months the Gulf Coast has seen new hardship as a result of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill. And just as we've sought to ensure that we are doing what it takes to recover from Katrina, my administration has worked hard to match our efforts on the spill to what you need on the ground. And we've been in close consultation with your governor, your mayors, your parish presidents, your local government officials.

And from the start, I promised you two things. One is that we would see to it that the leak was stopped. And it has been. The second promise I made was that we would stick with our efforts, and stay on BP, until the damage to the Gulf and to the lives of the people in this region was reversed. And this, too, is a promise that we will keep. We are not going to forget. We're going to stay on it until this area is fully recovered. (Applause.)

That's why we rapidly launched the largest response to an environmental disaster in American history -- 47,000 people on the ground, 5,700 vessels on the water -- to contain and clean up the oil. When BP was not moving fast enough on claims, we told BP to set aside $20 billion in a fund -- managed by an independent third party -- to help all those whose lives have been turned upside down by the spill.

And we will continue to rely on sound science, carefully monitoring waters and coastlines as well as the health of the people along the Gulf, to deal with any long-term effects of the oil spill. We are going to stand with you until the oil is cleaned up, until the environment is restored, until polluters are held accountable, until communities are made whole, and until this region is all the way back on its feet. (Applause.)

So that's how we're helping this city, and this state, and this region to recover from the worst natural disaster in our nation's history. We're cutting through the red tape that has impeded rebuilding efforts for years. We're making government work better and smarter, in coordination with one of the most expansive non-profit efforts in American history. We're helping state and local leaders to address serious problems that had been neglected for decades -- problems that existed before the storm came, and have continued after the waters receded -- from the levee system to the justice system, from the health care system to the education system.

And together, we are helping to make New Orleans a place that stands for what we can do in America -- not just for what we can't do. Ultimately, that must be the legacy of Katrina: not one of neglect, but of action; not one of indifference, but of empathy; not of abandonment, but of a community working together to meet shared challenges. (Applause.)

The truth is, there are some wounds that have not yet healed. And there are some losses that can't be repaid. And for many who lived through those harrowing days five years ago, there's searing memories that time may not erase. But even amid so much tragedy, we saw stirrings of a brighter day. Five years ago we saw men and women risking their own safety to save strangers. We saw nurses staying behind to care for the sick and the injured. We saw families coming home to clean up and rebuild -- not just their own homes, but their neighbors' homes, as well. And we saw music and Mardi Gras and the vibrancy, the fun of this town undiminished. And we've seen many return to their beloved city with a newfound sense of appreciation and obligation to this community.

And when I came here four years ago, one thing I found striking was all the greenery that had begun to come back. And I was reminded of a passage from the book of Job. "There is hope for a tree if it be cut down that it will sprout again, and that its tender branch will not cease." The work ahead will not be easy, and there will be setbacks. There will be challenges along the way. But thanks to you, thanks to the great people of this great city, New Orleans is blossoming again.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

END 2:16 P.M. CDT

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ONE NATION

Five Years Later: Bridging the Gulf

By **MARK HALPERIN / GULFPORT, MISS.** Monday, Aug. 30, 2010

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Members of the audience say the Pledge of Allegiance before President Barack Obama speaks at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans on the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina
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The best of America was on display Sunday afternoon, at just the right time. A series of ceremonies commemorating the five-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina showed everything that has been absent from the fight over plans to build an Islamic cultural center near Ground Zero in Manhattan was gloriously present along the Gulf Coast.

The two greatest national trials of the past decade — Sept. 11 and Katrina — are frequently and naturally linked. Both were

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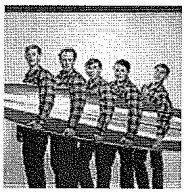

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unprecedented events that killed horrifying numbers of Americans, left vast and symbolic physical ruin, weakened the economy, damaged great cities and, most of all, struck at the heart of the nation's confidence and psychological security.
(See aerial photos of the World Trade Center's destruction.)

Unlike the former World Trade Center site, where almost nothing has been rebuilt, there has been a great deal of construction throughout the Gulf Coast, including New Orleans, where President Barack Obama was on hand to mark the anniversary, and on the Mississippi coast, where both tourism and the housing stock are coming back despite the additional harsh blow of the BP oil spill this past spring. The visual open wound in lower Manhattan has contributed to the shocking and divisive fight over whether to allow the Islamic center to be built. That battle, still raging and unresolved, has obscured many of the positive lessons and examples that came out of the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

Sunday's numerous commemorations were anchored by the President's speech at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans and, shortly after, by an event called "Five Years Forward: A Celebration of Katrina Recovery" in Gulfport, Miss., featuring the Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, and the first couple of Mississippi, Governor Haley Barbour and his wife Marsha. Both ceremonies included politicians from each party sitting side by side, their partisanship checked at the door. Both included tributes to the three essential blessings of the hurricane: the resilience of the people in the storm's path, the selflessness of neighbors who cared for others and the extraordinary kindness of thousands of volunteers who streamed into the region from all over the country to lend assistance to their fellow Americans in need.
(See TIME's special report "Katrina: Five Years After.")

Marsha Barbour's leadership on the coast in the weeks after the storm while her husband spent time in Washington lining up federal assistance inspired warm gratitude in the ceremony, and she nearly broke down in tears as she thanked the volunteers and organizations whose outpourings of generosity counteracted the ravages of the storm. A multiracial audience listened raptly as Governor Barbour told a tale of a rabbi from New York who encouraged his father to continue his volunteer work in

Mississippi during the Jewish high holidays as a finer tribute to "God's grace."

The Sunday celebrations around the Gulf were a reminder that unity, diversity and strength form the core of our country, and that our leaders, Obama especially, must encourage the nation to address our biggest challenges together. This was a lesson learned after Sept. 11, 2001, but has since been too often forgotten.

The legacy of Katrina, said the President, must be "not one of neglect, but of action; not one of indifference, but of empathy; not of abandonment, but of a community working together to meet shared challenges." Political leaders and citizens alike should take those words to heart when times get tough and when issues threaten to divide us.

See pictures of the challenge of memorializing 9/11.

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XAVIER-REOPEN Oct-24-2005 (960 words) xxxn

Water-damaged Xavier University in New Orleans plans to reopen

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- When Norman Francis was a freshman at Xavier University in New Orleans in 1948, his work-study scholarship landed him the job of repairing damaged books in the university library.

These days, Francis, who has been Xavier's president for nearly four decades, is once again fixing things, although this time on a colossal scale: overseeing the repair of the entire university.

The library books, damaged when the library filled with 6 feet of water in Hurricane Katrina, are just one of his concerns because nearly every campus building was waterlogged during the Aug. 29 storm and the massive flooding that followed.

An early estimate of the recovery price tag, including reconstruction, faculty salaries and student financial aid, was about $90 million. Finding the money to pay for the loss is now the daunting task before school officials.

Xavier, the country's only historically black Catholic university, does not have the large endowment that larger universities do. Instead, it has a $50-million endowment primarily restricted for scholarships. Eighty-five percent of its student body receives financial aid. The school's insurance will cover wind damage but not the extensive water damage on the campus.

Now, floodwaters have subsided, but they left behind layers of mildew and mold along with damaged books, furniture, carpeting and a buckled hardwood gym floor that had just recently been installed. The university's physical plant was destroyed and parts of roofs, including the roof of the newest residence hall on campus, were ripped away.

The campus is closed and currently surrounded by construction fencing while cleanup and repair crews fix rooftops and test electrical systems. Crews were dehumidifying the library and science buildings, tearing out mildew-infested walls and doing whatever else it will take to meet the goal set by Francis -- to be open for classes in January.

"The challenge is monumental; we're taking it one day at a time," Francis told Catholic News Service Oct. 13 in a telephone interview

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from the administration's temporary satellite office in Grand Coteau, La., one of four temporary locations set up for the university's administrative personnel since the hurricane.

The fiscal affairs office is currently at Grambling State University in Grambling, La.; the registrar is at the University of Dallas, and financial aid and resource development offices are based in Baton Rouge, La.

Even when he is not on campus grounds, Francis does not miss an opportunity to boast about Xavier's reputation, noting that it sends the largest number of African-American students to medical schools and that its pharmacy school is the top producer of African-American pharmacists in the United States.

This year, pre-Katrina, the school's enrollment was 4,100. Francis knows that number of students will not be able to return, but he also knows that many students want to come back and he wants to give them the opportunity.

"I'm passionate about it; we will be back," he said. "It might take time, but we'll be back to where we once were."

Tulane and Loyola universities, both in New Orleans and not as damaged by Hurricane Katrina, have offered the use of their facilities to Xavier if the university is unable to get all of its buildings up and running by the projected date.

Francis said the support from other colleges and foundations has certainly helped, but he would like to see more, especially from the Catholic community which is "very generous in giving to social causes." As he sees it, Xavier, founded by St. Katharine Drexel in 1925, is a "natural cause" for Catholics to help because of the school's role in educating African-Americans to be leaders in the church and the country.

Francis, the son of a barber, is keenly aware of the struggles of African-Americans in this country. After graduating from Xavier, Francis was the first African-American to be admitted to Loyola University Law School in New Orleans in 1952. He was offered the presidency at Xavier, as the university's first lay leader, the day the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

The 74-year-old president, by his account the longest-sitting university president in the United States, was putting in 13- to 14-hour workdays in his determination to get the school back on its feet. His home was destroyed after being under 8 feet of water in the hurricane. Currently, he and his wife are living with family members in Grand Coteau. Francis was also recently named chairman of the newly formed Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation by Gov. Kathleen Blanco.

Despite his hectic schedule, he shows no signs of looking to retire.

"The board told me from day one, I was on probation; when I learned to do it right, I could leave," he said, jokingly. He gives most of the credit to the people with whom he works, saying his administration and faculty members have made the university the success that it is and he is the "biggest cheerleader."

But behind his optimism Francis does not deny that there are plenty of daily frustrations, especially now.

"I never thought I would face (challenges) at this depth," he said. He noted the Scripture passage about God not giving people more than they can bear, and said in this situation God is "really pushing the envelope."

Francis said he was "calling on all the faith I've had to have, from birth to now, especially from growing up in a segregated society where I couldn't go to Communion until everyone else had received (it)."

He said his parents instilled in him the belief that "no matter what people say, you are a child of God." That belief continues to sustain him, as does the knowledge that the school, founded by a saint, will persevere.

"Our grounds are holy grounds," he said.

END

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Biography of the Surgeon General

Vice Admiral Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA

[original ≈ 8.18 MB]

Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA is the 18th Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service. As America's Doctor, she provides the public with the best scientific information available on how to improve their health and the health of the nation. Dr. Benjamin also oversees the operational command of 6,500 uniformed health officers who serve in locations around the world to promote, protect, and advance the health of the American People.

Dr. Benjamin is Founder and Former CEO of the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Alabama, former Associate Dean for Rural Health at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in Mobile, and Past Chair of the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States. In 1995, she was the first physician under age 40 and the first African-American woman to be elected to the American Medical Association Board of Trustees. She served as President of the American Medical Association Education and Research Foundation and Chair of the AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs (CEJA). In 2002 she became President of the Medical Association State of Alabama, making her the first African American female president of a State Medical Society in the United States.

Dr. Benjamin has a BS in chemistry from Xavier University, New Orleans; MD degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham; an MBA from Tulane University and eleven honorary doctorates. She attended Morehouse School of Medicine and completed her family medicine residency in Macon, Ga. She established a clinic in a small fishing village in Alabama to help its uninsured residents. Dr. Benjamin persevered through Hurricane Georges in 1998, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and a devastating fire, in 2006, often putting up her own money to cover expenses. She also became nationally prominent for her business acumen and humane approach to preventive medicine.

Dr. Benjamin is a member of the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She was a Kellogg National Fellow and a Rockefeller Next Generation Leader. Some of her numerous board memberships include the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, Catholic Health Association, and Morehouse School of Medicine.

In 1998 Dr Benjamin was the United States recipient of the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights. She was named by *Time Magazine* as one of the "Nation's 50 Future Leaders Age 40 and Under." She was featured in a *New York Times* article, "Angel in a White Coat," in *People Magazine,* on the December 1999 cover of *Clarity Magazine* and was on the January 2003 cover of Reader's Digest, She was also "Person of the Week" on ABC's *World News Tonight* with Peter Jennings, and "Woman of the Year' by CBS *This Morning.* She received the 2000 National Caring Award which was inspired by Mother Teresa, received the papal honor *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* from Pope Benedict XVI and was awarded a MacArthur Genius Award Fellowship.

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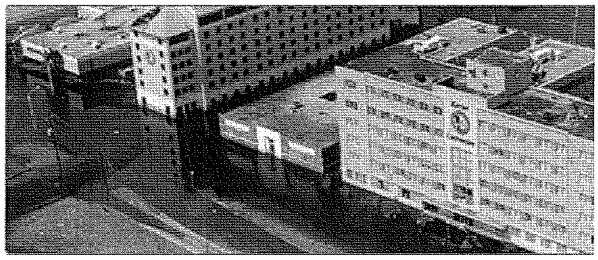

HURRICANE KATRINA 5 YEARS LATER: REFLECTIONS FROM THE XAVIER FAMILY

August 29, 2005, is etched into New Orleans history. Cataclysmic flooding from in the hours following Hurricane Katrina left hundreds of thousands of residents displaced, and despondent. Like most of the city, Xavier University suffered a de blow when every building—except the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament conven inundated with toxic flood waters.

From the mud and destruction arose an esprit de corps never before experience historic city. Great leaders emerged. Resiliency took hold. With St. Katharine as guide and under indomitable leadership, the university reopened its doors in Jar come back in such a short period of time is a credit to the faith, commitment and who put aside their personal losses and problems to make this miracle happen," Francis said in praise of the Xavier family.

To commemorate the 5th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Xavier has establish chronicle the experiences and reflections of our community members—present a will be displayed beginning Aug. 20 and archived in this special memorial. Pleas page and submit your reflections and photographs to the Katrina Memorial Elect again.

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Linda Rodriguez

Looking back, what moment stands out from the time of the evacuat the early recovery? .....

Structure

Deadly quiet. I couldn't speak; I couldn't hear; I couldn't react. Images and permeated every fiber of my being as we slowly -and silently- weaved our trees, gray soot-covered vehicles, and someone's belongings. There used Nothing made sense. Everything was strewn so carelessly about, but with had been rotting and rusting for an eternity. Stagnant mute chaos.

With only 1-1/2 blocks to go, we could get no closer. Still without a word, we out of the borrowed car, instinctively moving to clasp hands, desperately s life to ward off the encroaching heavy air that threatened to smother us.

"You ready?" I'd never heard Ned speak so softly, but I heard so distinctly

All I could muster was a pathetic "yea," and even it sounded garbled to m

Never moving more than inches apart, we climbed and crawled over tree looked so big standing.

"Good Lord."

I looked up, following his gaze. The Pathfinder wasn't where we had left it now sat 30 feet away, on top of the truck, made part of this new world's sc pasty gray film over it and everything in sight. Emotionless, I stood in awe

Almost at the same moment, we fixed our stare on the huge, orange, spra "X" and the numbers that filled each quadrant would come to both haunt a even conceive of the emotions our minds were protecting us from at that t

"It's standing. Our house is standing. Baby, baby, baby -we're home." I co the relief in his voice. We were going to be okay. Our home was standing. madness started a week earlier, fear, grief, and overwhelming helplessne hope. We were going to be okay.

There was something about that structure that sustained us. We lost near owned, but we seemed to not even know it. From the moment we realized strong; the home that we had worked on, together, for the last two years, finishing touches on only weeks before the storm; the home in which one, never let a day go by without saying "I love our home" - from that moment

We began to notice how the now wrinkled sheetrock made shadows and l Footprints we had unknowingly left in the murky brown sludge covering ou served as an epiphany of all we had retained. The shimmering subtlety of water swirls brought beauty to the dead fish on our bedroom floor. Gallons pounding of the flood waters created such glorious art that we could laugh what I hoped to be a salvageable item, I lunged my hand into a pile of ma

chicken that had been dispersed by the overturned freezer.

We would have moments of despair long into the years that followed, but those moments by grasping firmly ahold of that structure, for which our hc metaphor. I still can't define the actual structure of which I speak, but I knc binds me with my husband, my family, and my friends. Those flood waters most of which I've forgotten existed -but it could not wash away the found place, that would allow us to keep standing.

On this 5th anniversary, like the last 4, I will not look back at the devastati already begun to claim the airwaves. I will do my best to avoid the the ima creep into my head. And I will not "celebrate" the anniversary of a storm t will do is look straight forward and revel in the peace of that structure that

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Kendra W. Tircuit

How did Katrina affect your life? .....

An Original Untitled Poem
by Kendra Tircuit

Yesterday, I heard someone boldly proclaim,
"I'm over Katrina!"

and I exclaimed,

"Good 4 u!"

But, deep in my heart knew

I'm not.

I am not over Katrina...
at least not today...

4 everything has changed.

I have lost more than material things.
I've lost my sense of security.
I've lost my good neighbors, co-workers and friends.

My family has moved far away.

I've lost my bright-eyed optimistic view on life..

@ least today.

I've lost so much I can not say
or count.
Gotta pull that trusty calculator out!

One thing I have gained
& that is...

Total Dependence on Christ!

4 He kept me, never left me, won't forget me!

And, so, I guess I've come out on top.

But, sometimes I sit and just remember...

Remember when I ignored the flood warnings flashing while I watched my

Remember when I didn't care that New Orleans is below sea level and sit

Remember when I ran & tumbled down the levees as a child laughing with

Remember when the East used to be the sshhh! Child Please!

And, now, I can only remember and reflect and recall those good ol' days.

Ignorance Is bliss!

But,

One thing I know 4 sure...

God IS in Control
&
He Loves Me.

HE has made me whole!

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Rita Dyson

What do you want people today and in the future to read and understand

Katrina did not discriminate. It didn't matter if you were young, old, rich or
its path, it would be destroyed.

This was a time when the city was at its best and its worst.

After someone watches their home get demolished, they soon become pa
Violence became the special of the day. It was not uncommon to see peo
Some did it for survival and some did it for reasons unknown. New Orlean

However, it was also the time when the city was its strongest. Total strang
other. You had to be there to witness the random acts of kindness that we
were a city fighting to survive, but in order to do that we had to depend on
were united with one common thread: our great city.

I would like people to understand that the people of New Orleans will alwa

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Rene Lunkins Magee - New Orleans, LA

Looking back, what moment stands out from the time of the evacuation th
recovery? .....

It was August 29; I was sleeping through the hard rain. We didn't know Ka
at the time. It was me, my son Charvarn, and my daughter-in-law Leatreo

Leatreonne was six months pregnant at the time.

The wind started blowing at first hard, so hard that it blew the power breal
the water was over the tires of the truck. I laid back down in the bed and c
mind. Early in the morning we heard something go boom! The levees had
the blow shook our home. I woke my son up, and I opened the back door
coming fast. We tried to sweep the water out, but it just kept coming in the
the water kept coming in through the sinks, toilets, and through the bath t

We started to pour the water back out, but by this time the water was four
coming faster. Next thing I knew, the water was up to eight feet high! We
wouldn't budge. My son and I started swimming around the house; Leatre
bag (she couldn't swim).

We stayed in the house three days and nights. All of my furniture had rise
except for my bed. My son said to me, "Ma, don't worry about me. I'll get y

He went to my room and pulled my patio doors off of the hinges and swar
He heard the Coast Guard rescuing people. He brought the Coast Guard
Coast Guard if I could bring my puppies, but the Coast Guard said no. I ha
high in a cage.

Leatreonne went first into the boat, then me, and then Charvarn. Spike Le
away with his camera. They brought us to the Super Dome. I told my son
ain't going in there." I had heard that they were cutting up in the Super Do

10 to the Calliope Projects. We stayed by Leatreonne's mom's house. At l stove.

We were at Leatreonne's mom's house for a couple of days. One night we of a sudden helicopters were everywhere. Men jumped out of the helicopt we had to leave. They were calling us refugees and telling us that we had They started pulling us one by one into the helicopters by wire. We were t flown to San Antonio, Texas. We stayed in a San Antonio shelter for abou given housing to stay in after that in San Antonio.

Some people went to Houston and some stayed in San Antonio. As time v homesick. When the water went down we went back. It was a sad sight. I that my puppies were dead, nothing but their skulls were left in the cage.

Leatreonne had her baby early due to Katrina-related stress. Her baby gir February 2006 weighing in at four pounds.

I went to see my grandbaby and stayed in Houston with my son and daug days. When I went back to San Antonio, I called them every day to see hc

In 2007 we came back to New Orleans to try to get our house back and fi somewhere to live.

This was my time of Katrina. My grandbaby Charvon is now living with me four years old and healthy.

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Brittney Brown - New Orleans, LA

Looking back, what moment stands out from the t through the days of the early recovery? .....

There was an unfortunate moment that stood out Katrina evacuation. Every time I tell this story, it s spine and my eyes begin to water. My mentally c Madison was killed on the Danzinger Bridge [sho NOPD officers, known as the "Danzinger 7," have ranging from shooting my uncle to falsifying repor segment called "Shoot to Kill," which also feature and the false accusations towards my uncle Lanc

My family evacuated to a hotel in Scott, La. We w the telephone to hear from my two uncles Ronald received the news Ronald was killed. My mother, sister of both Lance and Ronald, was informed by

Dr. Romell Madison. All I remember in that mome
the phone and my grandmother collapsing in my
heard the tragic news, my mother spoke of two di
hurricane.

Dream 1:
My mother woke up crying to my father. She told
walked out onto the front porch of a house. The w
sky was getting dark, then it begins to rain. It was
approaching. As she stood on the porch, a little g
She said she could not see the young girl's face b
with a veil. The young girl held a flower up to my
"Everything is gonna be okay," then all of the pet

Dream 2:
Once again my mother woke up crying to my dad
funeral and all of our relatives were there. My mo
casket and her brother Ronald was laying there;
why he passed away.

These dreams eventually connected to our family
powerful message to me. The reason my uncle w
because he was murdered by NOPD police office
mother's first dream who told her "Everything is g
the progress that has been made so far with justi
NOPD tried to cover up the murders and falsify re
beginning to unfold. We are far from justice being
progress is being made. Police officers and serge
confessed to covering up the murder of my uncle
reports.

"For there is nothing COVERED, that shall not be
that shall not be KNOWN."--Luke 12:2

*The man holding the family puppy is my mentally
Madison.

*The group picture taken by Sean Gardner for US
Dr. Romell Madison, grandmother Fuki Madison,
mother Jacquelyn Brown, uncle Raymond Madis
Madison.

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Nannette Smith - New Orleans, LA

I've always tried to "find the lesson" in adverse situations. My faith tells me seek it.

After my family evacuated for Hurricane Katrina, 15 hours on the road to H of the lessons that I learned:

- I learned that no matter how much I love my family, we cannot all live a prolonged period of time.
- I learned the real meaning of "saving for a rainy day."
- I learned humility. Waiting in line for hours to receive food stamps and compensation was new to me.
- I learned growing up Roman Catholic does not preclude me from wors hearing the Word from a Baptist minister or Episcopalian bishop. Whe
- I learned that we work hard all of our lives to acquire many material th minutes, they can be taken from us. My neighbor said that once the w took less than 20 minutes to reach the roof. She was rescued.

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Melinda Shelton - New Orleans, LA

As a reporter, I covered hurricanes and floods an everything—yet vowed to rebuild their lives. Katri into a disaster story. I wondered: Do I have what

Day 1. The evacuation. Aug. 28, 2005. Late that When westbound traffic stalled on the spillway, I I Swirling, jet-black clouds engulfed the skyline. La waves against the railings. "I don't feel good abou cat wailing in a crate. My cell phone rang. "I'm lea I'll be back, I guaran-dam-tee-u." I wailed with Eli

In Baton Rouge, my friend Monika took in 3 huma

Day 2. We made it! No power, so what? Stranger shared BBQ and batteries. About noon, Pop fina What? It's hot as Hades, but the weather's beauti everywhere but it wasn't as bad as . . . What? Wh are you sure?

I called my house again. The answering machine the power went out, but I wasn't worried. . . . Uh had stopped ringing . . . it was on the floor. . . ???

Day 3. Norman Robinson spoke from the 4-inch
powered TV: NOLA is no more. People are dead,
Burning. Chaos.

Reality check: Norman said Gentilly is flooded. V
insurance. Dang.

Children on rooftops. People wading in fetid wate
nation's flag. The images seared our souls. Wher
America?

From dawn to dusk, the chilling thwop-thwop-thw
evacuees to medical triage at LSU nearly drove u

No longer the detached reporter, I was one of TH
Orleans. Horrified at the images, enraged by the
callous "Well, you knew it would happen."

Day 4. Roger Lee from Delacroix down in The Pa
sent me over. Said you need a project. I'm it." No
shirt, red skin peeling after hours in poisoned wat
They didn't let her in the helicopter with me." Sob
body.

Hooray for Whitney Bank! Mama Shelton bought
shirts. Roger talked incessantly and called everyc
fine. Got 'em out early. Have you heard from he

Day 5. That evening, unusual silence. I ran next
crumpled on the floor, scenes of his shattered bo
screen. Norman, haggard and hoarse, said The F
birthday.

Day 6: Totally lost.

Day 7. Roger's wife arrived. Miracles still happen

Week 3: An SLU colleague introduced me to Clar
opened her door to strangers—and saved my sar
Hammond. Classes started again. The new norm

Week 5: Went home, put our life on the curb, join

Week 6: Linda Rodriguez, an English instructor a
SLU office. Coincidence? I think not.

Days turned to weeks turned to months turned to

Week 88: Packed up the cats and the dog's ashe
serene. A brilliant azure sky over the Crescent Ci

Yep, I have what it takes to start over.

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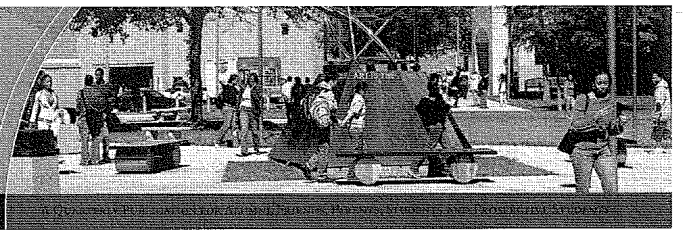
Eye On Xavier
Volume 7 – Summer 2009



From Storm to Stage: Katrina Freshmen Graduate

Freshman Named Kemper Scholar

Ariel Johnson, a freshman mass communications major from Baton Rouge LA, has been selected for the prestigious Kemper Scholars Program's Class of 2012.

The scholarship-mentorship program, designed to prepare students for leadership and service, promotes education in the liberal arts while providing opportunities for career exploration and practical experience through internships. The program has been sponsored by the James S. Kemper Foundation of Chicago IL since 1948.

Kemper scholars receive annual scholarships of $3,000 to $8,000 (based on need) for three years, as well as $6,500 stipends while serving internships at major international non-profit and for-profit organizations after their sophomore and junior years.

The first summer is spent in Chicago, where the scholars live in apartment residence halls and are placed in full-time administrative positions where they can learn about financial management, organizational strategy, fund-raising, and organizational administration.

Their senior class theme was "From the Storm to the Stage" and it aptly describes the experience of the 2009 XU graduating class.

As freshmen in August 2005, many of these students not only experienced their first New Orleans hurricane, a yearly natural threat to the Gulf Coast, but the worst natural disaster in New Orleans' recent history.

What makes these seniors stand out is that, whether a New Orleans native or first time resident, they were intent on returning to Xavier following the devastation of 2005's Hurricane Katrina, which had most of the city underwater and impacted the entire region.

LONG TIME COMING: Representative members of the "Katrina Class" of 2009 - (from left) Traylon Williams, Blake Clark and Takena Reese - anticipate the pageantry of Commencement at the Lakefront Arena.

Following the storm, XU President Dr. Norman C. Francis corralled his administrative staff to work on Xavier's recovery. The staff worked to meet the president's demand that Xavier re-open as soon as possible. They succeeded and the University re-opened in January 2006. That spring the majority of students returned to the campus. Xavier, with its campus buildings lit up at night, served as a beacon of hope to returning residents in the city.

The new fall '05 freshman class had only been on campus for a few weeks before the hurricane hit and displaced them. What made these students want to return even after enrolling in other universities that fall semesters?

Most say that they had already established a bond for the campus and their new friends. Some said even after attending XU for only a few weeks, their experience at other campuses did not compare to the warm family feeling, the sense of belonging and camaraderie they felt at Xavier.

Some of their classmates did not return for various reasons, but more than 74% did.

"Xavier is more of a family for me than when I was at another school after the storm," said senior business major Traylon Williams of New Orleans. "The friends I've met at XU, I see us being friends forever."

"There are other reasons, like the faculty," said Williams. "They really work with all of the students and even the staff, like Career

Continued on page 4

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Business Plan Competition
Did You Know? You Might Have Missed It

Business Plan Sparks Competition

FESTIVAL OF SCHOLARS: Tamorah Hawthorne discusses her research project with fellow students Xyisha Dunn and Jazmin Smith during the annual Festival of Scholars, a campus-wide showcase of the scholarly student research sponsored by the Center for Undergraduate Research.

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK: Some of the 50 XU students who gave up their spring break and traveled to Galveston TX to help with hurricane recovery efforts there remove a heavily damaged palm tree from the property of two senior citizens.

TECHNOLOGY DAY: Sydney Fomeret and Whitney McGruder haul off the free gifts and prizes they won at the University's annual Technology Day event.

The first campus-wide business plan competition, co-sponsored by Xavier's Entrepreneurship Institute in the Division of Business and Scott Management Team (doing business as McDonald's Restaurant), drew a wide-range of competitors.

First place went to *Challenge My Style,* an internet business providing opportunities for social networking and more, presented by the student team of Aaron Burgess, a senior mass communications major from Lancaster CA; Kory Twaites, a junior computer science junior from Kent WA; and Alexandra Broussard, a senior chemistry major from Columbus OH.

Second place went to *Room 247,* a community providing services, supplies, food, tutoring and computer access, created by junior psychology major Verina Walker of Mobile, AL; and Bretton LeFlore, a senior biology major from Mobile AL; while the third place finisher was *RSVP, LLC Cay Spa and Salon,* offering various massage styles and sports treatment, created by Lawrence Chambers, a junior business administration major from Temple Hill MD; Dominique Payne, a senior accounting major from Philadelphia PA; and Jarroid Warner, a sophomore marketing major from Baton Rouge LA.

Competition was open to teams of full-time students from any department. Student teams were required to submit a brief description of their idea for review by the business faculty in order to get early feedback and direction on preparing the business plan. Final business plans were then submitted and evaluated and the top four semi-finalists were invited to present their plan to a panel of judges composed of the Division of Business faculty members.

This is the first year that the Institute has offered the competition. Scott Management Team (DBA McDonald's Restaurant) sponsored this year's business plan competition by providing $5,000 in scholarship awards to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams. CEO Terry Scott has agreed to sponsor the competition yearly.

THEY MEAN BUSINESS: Terry Scott, CEO of Scott Management Team DBA McDonald's Restaurant, (holding plaque) congratulates the winners of the XU Entrepreneurship Institute's campus-wide student business competition, including (from left) Verina Walker, Bretton LeFlore, Aaron Burgess, Jarroid Warner, Scott, Dominique Payne, Lawrence Chambers, Kory Twaites and Alexandra Broussard.

Did You Know?

... that a school-record four XU athletic teams qualified for National Association of Intercollegiate (NAIA) national championships in 2008-2009? The men's and women's cross country teams qualified for nationals in November after sweeping their respective Gulf Coast Athletic Conference (GCAC) titles; while the men's and women's tennis teams both earned spots in the national tournament this spring after capturing the GCAC tennis titles.

... that during the past four seasons XU athletics has combined to win 17 GCAC team championships and qualify for 12 NAIA national tourneys?

... that the XU Department of Music's Jazz Band, Concert Choir and University Chorus ensembles performed in five eastern U.S. cities (Atlanta GA, Durham NC, New York NY, Philadelphia PA and Washington D.C.) during their annual spring tour?

... that XU senior Benjamin John Moore of New Orleans recently spent 10-weeks in the Andes Mountains of La Serena, Chile, participating in the International Research for Undergraduates program in astronomy? One of only six U.S. students in the program, the physics/Spanish double major served as an undergraduate research assistant working alongside professional astronomers from around the world at the famous Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory....that Xavier publishes an online research journal featuring the scholarship of its undergraduate students? The most recent issue of the Center for Undergraduate Research publication includes projects that emerged from the Communications, English, and Psychology departments. The publication is available for viewing at http://xulanexus.xula.edu.

... that Gregory Perrault '09 was named Young Professional of the Year by the Urban League of Greater New Orleans Young Professionals for his involvement in related student organizations and community outreach.

FATTAH CONFERENCE: Students Cher'Lynn Shaw, Stephen Williams and April Harry hang out with XU math professor Dr. Lester Jones at the 23rd annual Fattah Conference on Higher Education. It marked the first time the conference, which encourages minority undergraduate students to pursue graduate school degrees, was open to students from all Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Just In Case You Missed It

Xavier is #1 in the nation in placing African-Americans into medical school . . . everyone else is a distant second. While the final numbers for 2009 won't be in for some time, there is little doubt that XU will claim the top spot for the 16 straight year. But just in case, consider:

- Donald Brown '09, a biology/pre-med major from Grand Blanc MI, has been accepted into medical school at Meharry College.
- Dana Clark '09, a biology/premed major from Lanham MD, has been accepted into Life College of Chiropractic Medicine.
- Jada Etienne '09, a psychology/premed major from Cypress TX, has been accepted into medical school at Meharry College, New York University, the University of Texas-Houston, UT-Galveston, UT-Southwestern and UT-San Antonio.
- Olufemi Fadahunsi '09, a biology/premed major from Duncanville TX, has been accepted into dental school at the University of Texas-Houston, UT-San Antonio and Baylor University.
- Nicole James '09, a biology/premed major from Fresno TX, has been accepted into Life College of Chiropractic Medicine.
- Joffre Johnson '09, a chemistry/premed major from Mobile AL, has been accepted into medical school at Meharry College.
- Keisha Mitchell '09, a biology/premed major from Indianapolis IN, has been accepted into Indiana University Medical School.
- Angela Wallace '09, a biology/premed major from Lake Charles LA, has been accepted into medical school at Morehouse College and the University of Louisville.
- James Freeman '09, a biology/pre-med major from Hammond LA., has been accepted into the University of Rochester Medical School.
- Conisha Holloman '09, a biology/pre-med major from Baton Rouge LA, has been accepted into the University of Rochester Medical School.
- Leslee McElrath '09, a chemistry/pre-med major from Cincinnati, OH, has been accepted into Wright State Medical School.
- Joyce Mururthi '09, a biology/pre-med major from Gretna LA, has been accepted into LSU School of Medicine-New Orleans.
- Leslie Pham '09, a biology/pre-med major from Harvey LA, has been accepted into the University of Houston College of Optometry.
- Meghan Bias '09, a biology/pre-med major from Grand Coteau LA, has been accepted into Meharry Medical College.
- Paisley Robertson, a senior psychology/pre-med major from Westwego LA, has been accepted into the Life College of Chiropractic Medicine.
- Nikkia Edwards '09, a biology/pre-med major from Garland TX, has been accepted into medical school at the University of Texas-Southwestern.
- Maya Hills '09, a biology/pre-med major from Bunkie LA, has been accepted into Meharry Medical College.
- Ayana Johnson '09, a chemistry/pre-med major from Dunwoody GA, has been accepted into Meharry Medical College.
- Kayla Nixon '09, a biology/pre-med major from Jacksonville FL, has been accepted into medical school at the University of Florida and Mayo Medical College.
- Brittney Richardson '09, a biology/pre-med major from Independence LA, has been accepted into medical school at the University of Louisville and Howard University.
- Lauren Williamson '09, a biology/pre-med major from New Orleans, has been accepted into medical school at LSU-Shreveport.
- Davida Yarbrough '09, a biology/pre-med major from Madison AL, has been accepted into the University of South Alabama Medical School.
- Bryan Gallerson, '09 biology/pre-med major from Plano TX has been accepted into medical school at Howard University.
- Adrienne Noble '09, a biology/pre-med major from Maryland Heights MO has been accepted into the Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine.
- Ashley Smith '09, a biology/pre-med major from Silver Spring MD, has been accepted into medical school at Howard University and Johns Hopkins University.
- Shelly Tran '09, a biology/pre-med major from Marrero LA, has been accepted into medical school at Howard University.
- Pauline Smith '09, a psychology/pre-med major from Detroit MI, has been accepted into medical school at Howard University and Meharry College.
- Jessica Brunet '09, a sociology major from New Orleans, has been accepted to the Master's of Public Health - Health Policy program at Florida State University.

Eye On Xavier

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From the Storm to the Stage

(Continued from Page 1)

Services. They introduced me to the recruiter for the position I have now."

Williams currently works with the FBI. He plans to pursue a master's degree in public administration.

Psychology major Blake Clark attended a Texas college after the storm. "It was different learning and social environment. I love Xavier's atmosphere and environment. I was ready to come back."

"Initially I wasn't going to come to Xavier as a freshman," said Clark, who will attend Tulane's PhD program in social psychology on a full fellowship. "But I attended a summer program here and fell in love with Xavier and the city."

Pharmacy student Takena Reese was newly accepted into the XU College of Pharmacy in 2005.

"There is absolutely no place in the whole wide world that is like Xavier or New Orleans!" said Reese. "It was a long road for me to get to pharmacy school, a lot of challenges, but I considered it an honor and a privilege, everyone doesn't get this opportunity. I felt like I had made a covenant with Xavier when I signed up."

"I identify with everything Xavier stands for and that's where I needed to be," she added. "I didn't even try to get into another pharmacy school, or like some of my classmates, take courses elsewhere. I was intent on finding a place to live and getting back to Xavier."

"I identify with everything Xavier stands for and that's where I needed to be..."

Reese is currently employed with Slidell Memorial Hospital and plans to continue to work there and in the Tenet Health System.

All of the students agree that returning to New Orleans and Xavier was a given.

"I wanted to be a part of the rebuilding of my city," said Williams. "Not coming back or giving back through community service wouldn't benefit the city. The more people that come back and give back, the better our city will become."

Members of the Class of 2009 are now Xavier Alumni and are pursuing careers and advanced degrees. Fifty-two have already been accepted to medical school with more expected.

When Xavier held its commencement in May, classmates Takena, Traylon and Blake moved 'From the Storm to the Stage," to a bright future.

DEFINING EXCELLENCE: Lauchland Roberts and Kenesha Pace, winners of the University's top service awards -- are congratulated by XU President Norman Francis at the annual Baccalaureate Mass and Honors Convocation.

Visit XU online at www.xula.edu for more info or to submit an online application.

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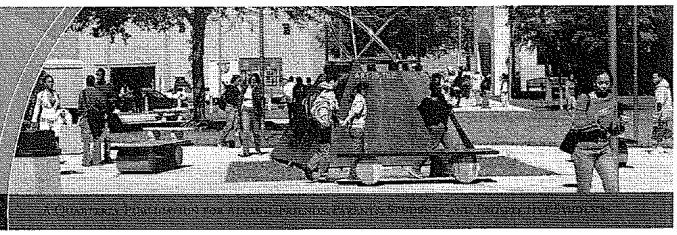


Enrollment Reaches Post-Katrina High

THE RIGHT FIT: Enthusiastic members of Xavier's Class of 2013 enjoy the camaraderie of Lagniappe Weekend – one of many summer events designed to enable new freshmen to hit the ground running in the fall.

Post-Hurricane Katrina enrollment has hit a new high this fall, thanks to a solid freshman class that exceeded projected levels and a welcome influx of new transfer students.

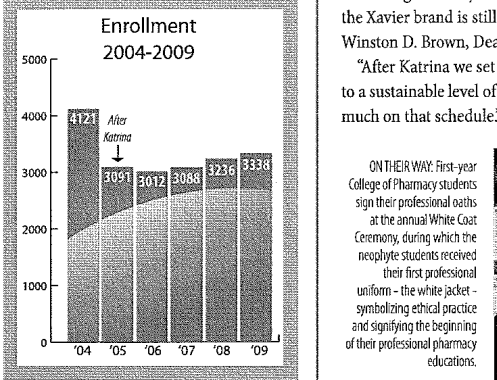
The addition of 765 new freshmen and 145 transfers has pushed the university's current overall enrollment to 3,338 students, three percent higher than last fall's 3,236. Enrollment has grown steadily the past four years after Katrina had knocked down the student population to around three-quarters of its best pre-storm figures.

"It's very gratifying to see students and parents from across the nation continue to put their faith in Xavier," said President Norman Francis.

"Despite the hardships we have endured following Katrina, Xavier has never wavered from its commitment to provide students with the academic excellence which people have come to expect," he added, noting that the University has produced nearly 3,000 graduates since re-opening six months after the hurricane. "Our students continue to compete and excel in the sciences as well as in business and liberal arts."

Admissions had projected an incoming freshman class of 740-750 due to the nationwide worsening economy, so "getting 765 through the door is a very encouraging sign that the Xavier brand is still strong among those who seek a quality education" according to Winston D. Brown, Dean of Admissions.

"After Katrina we set out on a five-year plan to gradually grow our freshman class back to a sustainable level of around 800 new students each year," he added. "We are pretty much on that schedule."



ON THEIR WAY: First-year College of Pharmacy students sign their professional oaths at the annual White Coat Ceremony, during which the neophyte students received their first professional uniform – the white jacket – symbolizing ethical practice and signifying the beginning of their professional pharmacy educations.

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XU Pharmacy Accreditation Reaffirmed

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) has reaffirmed the accreditation of the Xavier College of Pharmacy.

This decision was made at the June ACPE Board meeting and was based on findings from an evaluation team that visited the campus in Spring 2009. The Accreditation Action and Recommendations Report ensuing from the Board meeting concluded that the XU College of Pharmacy meets all 30 ACPE professional standards.

"We remain confident in the quality of our pharmacy program and are proud that this professional assessment confirms the value of Xavier's College of Pharmacy," said Dr. Norman C. Francis, president.

Xavier continues to be one of the top producers of African American pharmacists in the nation on an annual basis. Admission to its College of Pharmacy is highly competitive with more than 1,000 annual applicants for the 165 spots available in each first-year class. Of the 524 students who graduated from Xavier this past spring, 150 of them earned the Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

"The reaffirmation of our ACPE accreditation is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the Pharmacy faculty, students, and staff," said Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, XU senior vice president for academic affairs at Xavier. "It is vital for the Xavier name to be synonymous with excellence and high academic standards. This endorsement from ACPE contributes to that assurance."

Underscoring the vitality of Xavier's pharmacy program is the construction of a new, $30-million Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion supported by a major grant through the Qatar Katrina Fund in Xavier's fundraising campaign for this facility. The new Pavilion, slated for spring 2010 occupancy, will provide an additional classrooms, student areas, offices, laboratories, and a vivarium.

Young Physician Makes His Mark

There is no question that Dr. Derek Robinson '98 is an advocate for an accessible, transparent and efficient heath care system.

But at a time when it seems that all of America is embroiled in the heated debate about the future of health care, Robinson is not actively involved in the discussion. Instead he is immersed in the day-to-day delivery of health care services. Someone has to mind the store.

Just four years removed from residency, Robinson was recently named chief medical officer for Region V of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). It's a responsibility as huge as the title indicates.

His Chicago office, one of 10 regional CMS branches in the country operating under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Health and Services, administers the Medicaid and Medicare programs in six states (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan) and has a regulatory role over the myriad of healthcare facilities that serve Medicare beneficiaries.

Dr. Derek Robinson

His new job makes him the interface between the federal government and the health care providers of Medicare and Medicaid services in that heavily populated Midwest region of the U.S. As such, his actions take on added weight and play an important role in the quality of health care in the area.

That might seem like a lot of responsibility for a young physician, but despite his age, Robinson is far from in over his head. That's because he has crammed a lot of experiences into his still very early career and, just as importantly, possesses an innate ability to grasp the "big picture."

"Medicine is not what it was 30 years ago," said Robinson, an emergency medicine specialist by training. "Physicians not only need to be well-versed in basic science, evidence-based medicine, and bedside skills, they also need to be able to adapt an evolving healthcare landscape and be willing to play a broader role in an integrated health care system."

"The days of physicians clinging to their particular specialties are eroding," he said, pointing to an evolving value-based healthcare business model and the explosion of information technology. "Successful practice of medicine today requires a much more collaborative effort with attention to transparency, quality, and safety."

For his part, Robinson looks at the CMS position as another chapter in his overall growth as a health professional. And he's been busy. A fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians, his professional expertise includes board certification in emergency medicine with experience as a domestic and international flight physician. He has also compiled an outstanding record of involvement in physician-led organizations, advocacy and leadership development. In 2008 he was recognized as a "Hero in Emergency Medicine" by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), and for several years served as an ACEP national spokesman.

Robinson holds a medical degree from Howard University as well as an M.B.A. ('07) degree from the University of Chicago. Following his graduation from medical school, Robinson matched at the University of Chicago for residency. He later served as an attending emergency physician at Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Chicago IL for four years before joining the staff at the Spalding Regional Medical Center. In late summer, he accepted the appointment to CMS.

Surprisingly, Robinson continues his clinical practice of emergency medicine.

"I am fortunate that my schedule is extremely flexible," said Robinson, who noted that his new role allows him to leverage his clinical expertise with his business acumen to enhance the broader health care delivery system.

EUROPEAN TRAVELERS: Music faculty member Darah Rahming (second from right) greets four senior music performance majors, all of New Orleans, – (L to R) Myron Hartford (Clark High School), Danielle Edinburgh-Wilson (McDonogh 35), Paul Robertson (St. Augustine) and Charles James (St. Augustine) – who are back on campus after spending their summer performing with assorted ensembles in Norway, Spain, Turkey/Greece and Spain, respectively, this past summer. Rahming herself toured with Porgy & Bess in Germany.

XU / NYU Partnership Offers Opportunities in Nanotechnology

Offering first year freshmen an opportunity to do research and increasing minority graduate study in the nanotechnology field is the goal of a new partnership between Xavier and New York University.

The two schools have received a $3 million grant from the National Science Foundation to bolster diversity among materials scientists through collaborative research and curriculum development. XU chemistry professor Lamar Meda and physics professor Bryan Bilyeu head the project here at Xavier.

"Materials science builds bridges between scientists and engineers," said Meda. "This research is cutting edge and there are very few undergraduate programs, none at an HBCU and currently none in southern Louisiana. This is a hot field. Nanotechnology is the wave of the future."

The grant was one of eight awarded this year under NSF's Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) program and funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

"This research involves chemistry and physics," said Bilyeu. "Our materials research group is interdisciplinary. Our first year students will conduct research with their professor, not a graduate student or assistant, but directly with the professor. We'll also utilize Peer Mentoring – pairing new freshmen with upper classmen so that they are doing research working in pairs."

"Getting students in the lab this early will make a huge difference; they'll be so much better prepared and advanced by the time they graduate," said Meda. "Our goal is to make high school students aware of the opportunities that are available. We have excellent faculty that do cutting-edge research in the sciences and engineering including nanotechnology. PREM can provide financial support up to $10,000 per year to each student."

PREM will provide Xavier undergraduate students with the skills necessary to guarantee their success in graduate school at any research-oriented university. In addition, there will be several collaborative research projects and summer research teamwork with NYU graduate students.

Admission to the program is extremely competitive. Students must major in either chemistry or physics and be interested in doing research in materials science. For more information contact Dr. Meda at 504-520-5324 or lmeda@xula.edu.

Economic Impact of University Gauged

A recent economic impact study shows that Xavier is a significant contributor to the metropolitan area's economy.

According to the study, Xavier generates more than $320-million in economic activities, and about $115.6-million of that are household earnings in the Greater New Orleans Region. The nation's only Historically Black & Catholic university is one of the area's leading employers, and its spending helps to provide more than 4,200 jobs in Orleans Parish.

According to Dr. Ronald Durnford, XU vice president for planning and institutional research, approximately $158.6 million of the total economic activity generated is due to spending by students and visitors from out of state, plus spending by the University on those students.

"The unique economic contribution of Xavier is that we bring millions of dollars into the City and the state unlike the typical business that just re-circulates dollars within the State," said Gene D'Amour, senior vice president for resource development at Xavier.

The study was conducted by Frederick Rodgers, a respected economist at Medaille College in New York, who employed the Regional Input-Output Modeling System to estimate Xavier's economic impact on the region.

XU Ranks High in Diverse Issues Annual Report

A special report by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* magazine once again provides documentation of Xavier's success in a number of academic disciplines.

In its annual "Top 100 Undergraduate Degree Producers" issue (June 2009), the magazine shows XU once again ranking first in the nation in the number of African American students earning baccalaureate degrees in two areas – the biological and biomedical sciences, as well as the physical sciences.

Xavier is comfortably ahead of the pack in both categories: graduating 120 students in the biological and biomedical sciences – nearly 20 percent more than that of second-place Howard University – and another 41 students in the physical sciences – twice that of runner-up Jackson State University. Xavier also places 41st and 44th in awarding undergraduate degrees to African Americans in history and psychology, respectively.

The *Diverse Issues* report is based on a review of the 2007-2008 preliminary data distributed by the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the effect of Hurricane Katrina (e.g. Xavier's smaller total enrollment).

The magazine has reported on degrees conferred since 1992, tracking trends in bachelor degree conferrals to African American and other minority students.

Eye On Xavier

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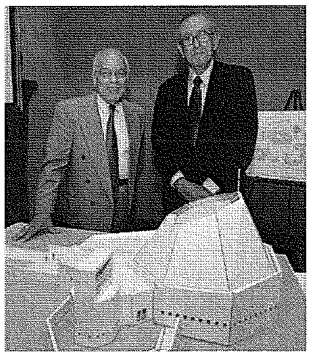
Pelli Visit Brings Drexel Chapel Closer to Reality

It would be an understatement to suggest that building a free-standing religious chapel on campus has been an elusive dream for most of Xavier's history.

A chapel was actually included in St. Katharine Drexel's original blueprint plans for the Xavier campus in the late 1920's and it has been mentioned as an upcoming project in nearly every university strategic plan for the past 80+ years. However those plans were always deferred in order to address other essential campus needs such as new classrooms and laboratories, faculty and staff offices, living residences and other student oriented service facilities.



But that dream is finally about to become reality. Last week the long-awaited project officially moved off the university's "to do" list and onto its "get it done" list when world-renowned architect César Pelli visited the XU campus to unveil his design for the new St. Katharine Drexel Chapel before senior university staff.

Like the other buildings on campus, the chapel's exterior will be made of limestone. Its domed roof will be made of copper with a large cross located strategically at its crest which architect Pelli joked "will be visible from the airport to the river..." adding that "...people will see this cross and know it is the chapel at Xavier University."

President Norman C. Francis expressed his enthusiasm over the latest developments.

"The new chapel and its centrality on campus will reinforce Xavier's historic Catholic identity and its continued commitment to the goals and mission established by Saint Katharine, and will welcome students of all faiths to share in their spiritual development," he said.

"The idea of constructing a building with spiritual purposes is extremely attractive to me," said Pelli, who himself grew up in a Catholic family. "This building will embody Drexel's traits of modesty, simplicity and spiritually. It will make you feel totally uplifted."

PELLI ON CAMPUS: XU President Norman C. Francis and world-renowned architect César Pelli unveil the design for the new St. Katharine Drexel Chapel. Construction of the long-awaited campus religious facility, which will sit on the site of the old Student Center building, is expected to begin next spring once the new Qatar Pharmacy extension is completed.

Visit XU online at www.xula.edu for more info or to submit an online application.

Office of Institutional Advancement
Phone: (504) 520-7575
Toll Free: 1-877-935-8898

Office of Admissions
Phone: (504) 520-7388
Toll Free: 1-877-XAVIERU
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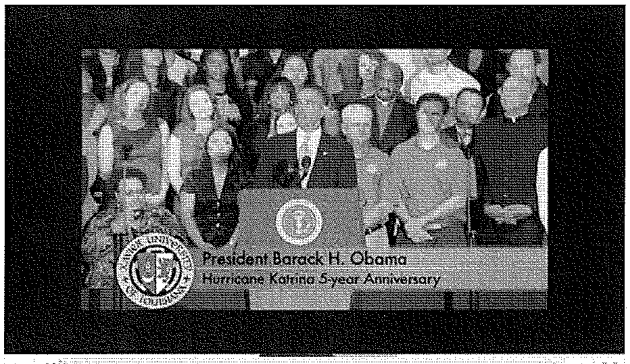

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It's August 29, 2010, just five years after Hurricane Katrina. The 44th

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I couldn't fail to notice that Miss Xavier was really REALLY nervous (from her voice) introducing Pres. Obama...lol...but I understand her situation perfectly...trust me.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring 2010

Dear Xavier Alumni & Friends:

What a great time to be in New Orleans, and to be here at Xavier! In early February 2010, the future of New Orleans forever changed as a result of the New Orleans Saints victory in Super Bowl XLIV. The level of excitement generated by this accomplishment has been contagious. Simultaneously, both locally and nationally, we have experienced an equally high level of excitement as evidenced by such major events as the hopeful end of what has been described as the nation's worst economic downturn in a generation, the recent passage of the health care reform law, the anticipation in New Orleans of a new mayoral administration, and the beginning of Xavier's eighty-fifth year of existence.

In this issue, we are pleased to be able to share with the Xavier family our featured story which provides a glimpse of the major construction and renovation projects occurring on campus. Five years post-Katrina, the University continues to strategically acquire and develop properties that have been deemed critical in support of the types of programs and facilities that are important to both student and faculty recruitment and retention. Two projects in particular, the Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion and the St. Katharine Drexel Chapel, are generating a great deal of interest and excitement.

On the academic front, interest from prospective students remains strong, an encouraging sign that continues to support our long-term goals. The University recently embarked on a new academic initiative aptly titled *Read Today, Lead Tomorrow,* which is designed to ensure that the entire campus community appreciates the correlation between reading and lifelong learning. I encourage all alumni to journey with us on this life altering process, which was developed in support of our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) – an initiative in support of our ongoing ten year accreditation review.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the continued support of thousands of generous alumni and friends who choose to financially support the University. This issue includes our annual Honor Roll of Donors, which lists those donors who made a financial contribution during the period January 1st - December 31st, 2009. The continued support and generosity of each and every donor is a vital component of our mission to educate deserving students, and we remain eternally grateful to each and every one of you.

We are most pleased to include in this issue photos of the more than 400 alumni who returned to celebrate a class reunion during Homecoming 2009. We are always grateful whenever alumni choose to visit us due in part to the impact these visits have on current students.

In closing, I am confident that even though the Super Bowl was won, the New Orleans Saints will not rest on their laurels. The same can be said for Xavier University of Louisiana. Much work remains to be done and with your unwavering support, commitment, and prayers, together we will continue to make Xavier University a great institution.

Sincerely,

Norman C. Francis
President

White Humanist of the Year

Dr. Michael White '76, has been named the 2010 Humanist of the Year by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. White, a renowned jazz clarinetist, bandleader, composer, jazz historian and Xavier music and Spanish educator, received the organization's top honor at the 2010 awards ceremony. When nominating White for the award, Nick Spitzer, producer and host of the *American Routes* syndicated radio broadcast and Tulane University professor of American studies and anthropology, described White as the "foremost player of traditional New Orleans jazz clarinet alive today."

THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL - President Norman C. Francis introduces Xavier Herald newspaper staffers Kevin Barnes of New Orleans and Stacey Windon of Prairieville LA to WDSU-TV anchorman Norman Robinson following the New Orleans' Mayoral Candidates Forum broadcast live from the Xavier campus.

Big Easy Awards Honor Music Professor

Dr. John Ware '77, XU professor of music and conductor/music director of the New Orleans Black Chorale, was named recipient of the Big Easy Entertainment Award's 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award. He was honored at the organization's 16th annual Tribute to the Classical Arts Benefit Gala, which supports the Foundation for Entertainment Development and Education. The designated Rosa Keller Endowed Chair in Music at Xavier, Ware teaches voice, conducting, vocal diction, vocal literature and pedagogy as well as serving as conductor of the XU Concert Choir and Opera Theater.

Xavier Economic Impact Gauged

An economic impact study shows that Xavier University of Louisiana is a significant contributor to the metropolitan area's economy. According to the study, Xavier generates more than $320 million in economic activities in the Greater New Orleans Region. The University is one of the area's leading employers, and its spending helps to provide more than 4,200 jobs in Orleans Parish. The study was conducted by Frederick Rodgers, a respected economist at Medaille College in New York, who employed the Regional Input-Output Modeling System to estimate Xavier's economic impact on the region.

TRIBUTE TO A LEGEND - Featured performers Dr. Michael White '76 and Donald Harrison perform music selections heavily influenced by the late Sidney Bechet, a New Orleans born clarinetist and soprano saxophonist. The program also included reflections from art professor Ron Bechet, a nephew of the legendary music pioneer.

HOW TIME FLIES - Cynthia Cooper of the XU Information Technology Center and Karen Watkins '69 of the President's Office, both with 40 years of service, receive the applause of a standing room only crowd during the annual Founder's Day Convocation. A total of 59 long-time faculty and staff members were recognized.

Groundbreaking Puts COP Expansion On Fast Track

Work on the Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion began in May 2008 after Amir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani – whose middle eastern nation of Qatar provided Xavier with an unexpected post-Katrina windfall grant of $17.5 million – visited the city to witness the official groundbreaking ceremony.

When completed later this year, the much-needed, five-story, 60,000-square foot addition – which had been in the planning stages for several years – will allow the COP to sustain its increased enrollment growth while drastically improving the overall quality of the academic programs and research endeavors.

Each year more than 1,000 students apply for admission to the College of Pharmacy, yet only 165 (15 percent) are admitted due to space and staffing constraints. The addition will give the College the capacity to support and maintain its strategic enrollment target of 650 students – an impressive 34 percent increase since 2002.

"Each year more than 1,000 students apply yet only 15 percent are admitted..."

The Pavilion will be connected to the Library Resource Building and the existing College of Pharmacy building facing the campus' I-10 boundary to the north. The tennis courts and the old Student Center, replaced by the new University Center in 2003 and out of use since then, were both removed to make way for the new structure.

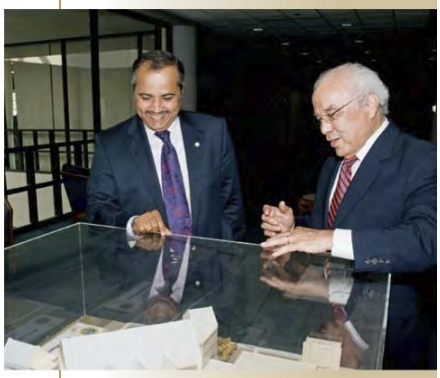
Plans call for moving most of the existing laboratories to the new building, while remodeling space in the original building for additional classrooms, conference rooms, and faculty and staff offices.

All of the new high-tech teaching labs, as well as two large auditorium-style lecture halls – each capable of seating as many as 200 students – will be housed in the expansion. The building will also hold teaching and research laboratories, a mock pharmacy skills laboratory and a Drug Information Center.

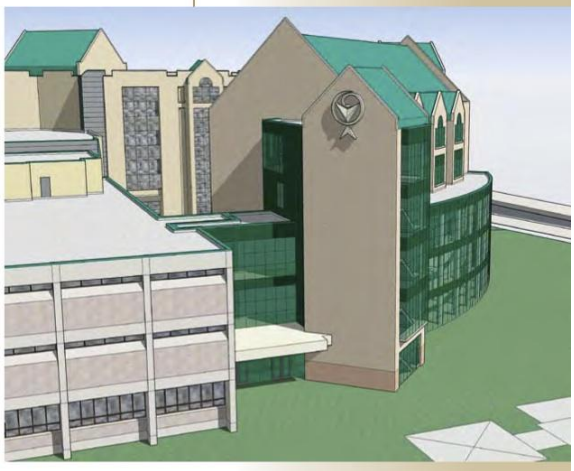
The addition will feature enhanced learning stations, satellite technology, large screen projection capability, enhanced audio, and research laboratories equipped with the latest technological equipment and software.

"A well-equipped pharmacy facility not only supports student development and faculty research interests, but also allows the College to build important relationships with the pharmaceutical industry, other health care providers and the general population who depend on the educational seminars and clinical services that we provide," said COP interim Dean Kathleen Kennedy.

"Providing our faculty and students with the latest research equipment and facilities to help address major issues and proper drug delivery is critical if we are to continue to maintain our important healthcare leadership role," she added.



Hamad Al-Dosari, senior diplomat with the Embassy of the Nation of Qatar, gets an update on the progress of the new pharmacy pavilion from XU President Norman Francis.



An architect's rending of the finished College of Pharmacy expansion as seen from the University Center.

APPENDIX E
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Erica C. Taylor
Interview at Hampton University
Mrs. Yuri Milligan

Erica Taylor: All right, let me start with some details about you, because I'm going to pretend that I don't know you.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely, and I will give you some. . .

Erica Taylor: Can you tell me how you came to this position, and what your background is in journalism or public relations, and how long you have been in this position?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely. My name is Yuri Rogers Milligan, and I received my undergraduate degree at Hampton University in 1997. I have an undergraduate degree in print journalism. I worked at newspapers from 1997 to 1999. I worked at the *Daily Progress* in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the *Daily Press* in Hampton, excuse me, Newport News, Virginia. At the *Daily Press,* I was a advertising copy writer, and at the other paper, I was a reporter.

Erica Taylor: I didn't know that.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: See? You're learning stuff. I started working at Hampton University as a PR assistant in 1995. I received my Master's Degree from Aldon U University *(¿ Spelling ?)* in 2001 in public administration. I did course study and emphasis in non-profit marketing. Throughout the years, I've been promoted from para assistant to para specialist to senior para specialist, and I became director of the department in '04. Double-check on that. I think it was '04, yeah, in 2004. Right, 'cause I had all three of y'all at the same time, right? You, Alison . . .

Erica Taylor: That was Aiyanna.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: That was Aiyanna. Yeah.

Erica Taylor: But, I remember when I was still a student you were director. And I graduated December of '04.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Right. It was Aiyanna, Alison, and Andrew. And then, right, okay? You graduated from December of '04.

Erica Taylor: But you were director, because I remember asking if I could come work in the office, and you told me "no."

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: What do you keep talking about? I never told you "no," Erica! I didn't! We had too many interns at that moment. Erica reminds me of that every time. *(laughter!)* What else? Is that it?

Erica Taylor: I think so on the background part. So what is the make-up of your office, how many staff members do you have, and what are their jobs?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Okay. Absolutely. We have three PR specialists, and they each have a beat. They work with different schools and departments in the university. We have a graphic designer; we have an administrative assistant; and we usually have two to three interns each semester.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. And what are the regular activities of publications that your office puts out?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely. Well, of course, we do on a daily basis we do media relations; we do press releases; we do social media; we do a faculty, staff, and local alumni newsletter called *The Hampton Life.* We also now distribute it in local supermarkets.

Erica Taylor: Okay, that's interesting.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: We have an online student publication called *Student Connection.* It's online, and we also do a research publication each year; we do two alumni magazines a year, and I forget -- we do an expertise guide every year, and I think that's about it. We also do different smaller publications and fliers, and announcements that come up.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. Do you consider public relations as a management function at this institution?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Yes.

Erica Taylor: Okay, and do you feel that university leadership requests and respects your opinion regarding communications issues?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: For the most part.

Erica Taylor: Okay, let's see. Have you been successful in recommending or implementing communication activities to the administration?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I would answer that with somewhat. Some ideas and some implementations have been, and we are still working on some others, and I think that especially in academia and higher education, that sometimes there is a thought that most of the emphasis in universities is all on academics. The other areas sometimes have to push to get in and to understand, so we have to advocate for a lot of other publics, not just say, students and faculty.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: So sometimes it's an uphill battle, but I think that we accomplished some things and are still working on some others.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Thank you. That's all the background information I need, so now we will talk specifically about the crisis that happened. Can you just give me a general overview of what happened, kind of the chain of events?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Sure. Absolutely. On April 26th at 1:00 a.m., we had a ...

Erica Taylor: And what year? That was 2009?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: 2009. Absolutely. April 26, 2009 at approximately 1:00 a.m., we had a former student come on campus, and go into one of the dorms, and injured a dorm worker and a pizza delivery man by shooting them.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Was the student a graduate of the university, or just a former student?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: He was not a graduate. He was just a student.

Erica Taylor: All right. Did you or your office have a crisis communication plan prior to this crisis?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Yes, well the university has a crisis plan that includes, you know, the different areas in the university. Crisis communications, excuse me, that crisis plan is headed up by our Dean or Vice President of Student Affairs, and of course, it includes like the Chief of Police, and Director of University Relations, and the telecommunications folks. We do have that group. Our office also does have a working crisis communications plan.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. Did you use either of those plans or both during this time?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Both were used. As soon as the incident happened, of course, the University Crisis Plan went into effect.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: And the necessary people were notified . . .

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: . . .and you know from there where you, you know, what you need to do after that.

Erica Taylor: Okay. I think you just answered it, but was that the first thing that happened was the crisis plan was put into action, or were there actions taken, and then the plan was picked up?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think the plan went into action right away, because once the incident was reported to the university police, they immediately notified the people who make up the crisis communications, crisis teams, and they went on from there.

Erica Taylor: Okay, got it. And what is your opinion of the media in this situation? Did you consider them a partner, or a friend, or did you consider them more of a -- not an enemy -- but maybe a hindrance? What is your opinion?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that question is -- I will answer it in a couple of stages.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that initially the media was a hindrance because school shootings are hot news.

Erica Taylor: Right. That's what I'm doing my dissertation on.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely. The minute that it hit that there was a school shooting, I think we got what I would consider pounced on by every national outlet, by of course, all local and regional media because it was a school shooting.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: And there was such a, there was such interest in it, and knowing that's such a hot topic that there was really a push to get the details before the details were available.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: So I think that once all the details were available and once nobody was going to be fatally. . .

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: . . . nobody was fatally injured, I think that the media became more of a friend, and kind of calmed down.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: And I think that unfortunately, if it was a bigger tragedy, that the media would have kept with that. But I think that once, we had put out the statement, once we released a statement, and once it was clear that nobody was going to die, and that no students were shot, that was another big thing, once that was clear, there was less of a hurry to report, and more of, you know. . . Some national media just backed off completely after that, because it was turning from . . .

Erica Taylor: There was something else that happened, I want to say, at another university around that time. I don't remember, but . . . I was watching the news. Something covered it up. I will go back and find that. Okay, just backing up a little bit, while we're talking about the media, same question, but do you feel like they are a partner or a hindrance on a regular basis when there is not a crisis situation going on? What is your opinion?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: My opinion is they are a partner.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that we work well with the media in this office. We return all calls within 24 hours, and usually in the same working day or at least to know that we will get back to them, and I think that the media respects that, and in turn we respect them. Of course, it's a relationship that can always be a little rocky from time to time, but I think that in general our encounters have been very -- what is the word... Truly beneficial.

Erica Taylor: There you go. That works. Okay, now some of the details about what you did during the time of the crisis. You gave me the date that it happened. When do you consider from your office's perspective, when do you consider it being over? Was it that same day, the next day, a week later, when did you consider the situation ending?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: The situation has not ended. I don't consider it. I don't consider it.

Erica Taylor: Say that again to make sure the machine picks it up.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I don't consider the situation to have ended. I think that once, I think that because of the Virginia Tech shooting, that that puts school shootings in a whole different light...

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: ... and so every time there is a school shooting there is mentions of, you know, there's mentions of these are the students in the last year. It comes up. There's mentions of -- we have not had many, but there's some -- parents of the students, or students that have questions about what happened, so I don't consider it over. It's something that you continually deal with. I mean weeks after. First, you know, the young man that did the shooting was caught, then he was arraigned, then he went to trial, so those things keep coming up, and every time, you know, so . . .

Erica Taylor: Okay, so it's on-going. Even on a general basis, how do you deal with that on-going situation?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think we deal with it by just answering the questions, and being up front and being . . . and giving the details of what happened. I think that has actually given people comfort, and given people understanding that, you know, this was not a Virginia Tech situation; nobody died, and no students were injured, and also by telling them what precautions that the university is taking so that something like this won't happen again or to try to be prevent something like this from happening again.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So who do you consider your main audiences or publics in this situation?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Well, initially, of course, it was the students.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: We had to communicate to the students that the person was apprehended; that you are safe; that, you know, you can come back on campus; you can go to your room; you can do this; we have counselors available -- those are the main. And of course, it was the parents of the students -- the parents or families who were calling. There were some students in that particular dorm who were evacuated, and didn't have their phones, or so they weren't in touch, so we had to communicate with the parents. Of course, we just had to communicate with the entire world, because as I said, the minute they said school shooting it was viral, and everybody knew about it, so there were a lot of concerned people wanting to know and we had to give them answers.

Erica Taylor: I think you just answered this, but I was going to ask if a certain audience or public were more of a priority than others. Was that the students . . .

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think definitely the students. I think that, you know, this is their home, this is where they live and work. And if something happens in your home, you have to communicate with these folks right away, and so from the first time that I got on campus, the first thing when I came and I met -- I went to the police, and the police took me to where Dr. Harvey, the Vice President (?) of Student Affairs and the Chief of Police were, and they were surrounded by students. They were talking to students. That's what they were doing. And so that is what we did for a few minutes. Obviously we had to go and do a lot of stuff.

Erica Taylor: And this was right after the shooting, so some ...

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Yeah. I wouldn't say prep ..I would say within two hours or so.

Erica Taylor: Right, but some odd hour of the morning?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely.

Erica Taylor: I think you answered that one. How did you decide the best way to communicate with students? Did you use -- I was going to ask you this later, but did you use the text messaging system, or how did you find out the best way? Was it, did you find out that it was best to go to their dorms, or talk to them in the parking lot, or something like that? Would you elaborate on that?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: It was a variety of ways they communicated with the students. Of course, the dorm directors were notified right away and they were supposed to tell everybody on your floor. They left the text messaging, the e-mail, and the voice mail. There was the next day there was notes, there was actual letters under everybody's door on campus, so all of these ways were taken to communicate with the students. We had a press conference at 4 p.m. the day of the shooting . . .

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: After the press conference -- which, you know, a lot of students showed up at the press conference, and they couldn't hold anymore, so immediately after that we moved to the Student Center where we just had a conversation with the students.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. Great.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Then on the next day, that Monday, there was another opportunity to talk to the students in the Ogden Hall. We invited all the students.

Erica Taylor: Great. What was your main objective in handling this situation, or continuing to handle this situation?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think initially the main objective was to let everybody know that there was nobody fatally hurt; that everybody was okay; that there were no students hurt; that the students were okay, and the dorm was secure. Initially that was the objective. Then I think the bigger picture objective was to communicate to people that one, this was something that could happen anywhere, but these are the precautions we're going to take to make sure something like this never happens again at Hampton University; that Hampton University is still a safe campus; you know, the students here are safe. This is a kind of a freak thing that happened, but that, you know, this is a good university, a good and safe place for students to come and live.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Do you think that what you were just saying about this being a safe university, do you think that was the overall theme, or the overall message that you gave or was there another one?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think the overall message that we gave was that nobody was fatally injured, and there were no students hurt. That was the overall message. And also I would say that we also wanted to communicate this was something that yes, this is something that could happen anywhere, and that we're going to put some things in place so that it doesn't happen anymore.

Erica Taylor: Okay. My next question, piggy-backing off of that is what were some of the things put in place after the fact to help to prevent something like this happening again?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: One of the things we did was we did upgrade our text messaging system. We now also have a loudspeaker on campus that can be heard always and also a siren on campus, so we did implement those two.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: There are also some other mental health things that came up where they are communicating with the current students that, you know, these are the places to go, do you need help, if you have questions. So those efforts which were always in place which is something enhanced to communicate better with the students to let them know they have this opportunity.

Erica Taylor: Sounds good. I think that we have answered a lot of these as we have been talking. Let me see if I missed any. Were there any forms of communication that you think were omitted that you think should have been used?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Let me think about that one.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that in terms of -- we did the text messaging, the e-mails, letters to the parents, letters to the students, letters to faculty and staff, so I don't think that we omitted any forms of communication. I think that we now have a better plan in place to deal with things a little bit quicker, and also to probably have a plan in place so that we can communicate quicker with some of the national media in case something like this would ever happen again, knock on wood, hopefully not. By the time I got here it was just crazy with voice mail and *(...Cannot understand her...)* By the time everybody else got in, so I think that some of those we have worked the kinks out.

I think that we have used all the avenues of communication. At the time though, I will say, that we did not have an organized social media program, so I think that now that we have that, that would be one avenue that we could get the information out quicker and so I would say social media.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Great, great. All right, you have answered some of these. To ask specifically, did you do any follow-up or get any feedback, or do any evaluations to see if what you did was effective, or if it could be more effective, as your opinion was, but did you get anyone else's feedback?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely. We actually had a consultant that I spoke to from the day of. So, and I did get feedback on the statement that we released from several... you know, especially the other PR directors from different universities that communicate with each other when something happens. And the timing, they thought it was good. They thought that the statements went out well. Some of them called the next day to offer their help and condolences, and I thought that that kind of camaraderie between, you know, PR directors at universities, and of course, I'm sure other people in their position got the same help from their peers. They thought that the statements that were released were timely, and that they *(...Cannot understand her...)*

One of the things that the consultant, you know, pushed for and that I pushed for was having a press conference on the same day.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: And it was at 4:00 o'clock. Some people thought we should have had it earlier. The incident happened at 1 a.m. that morning. The press conference was at 4:00 p.m. that day, so some people thought it should have had it earlier. So that's pretty much the feedback.

Erica Taylor: Okay, let's see. Overall and again I think we have talked about it. But do you think that...Let me ask you this separately. What do you think were the major strengths and the major weakness of what you did communications-wise?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that communication-wise, one of the weaknesses, unfortunately, was that the media got here before I did, so when I was driving up, I was passing all of the tv stations doing their stand-ups on the corner and, you know, at this point they had already talked to the students, they have already talked to. . . So that is one of the main weaknesses that we have corrected. We have rectified that, that I am on the first call list. But this is something that had never happened before, so the calls were delayed.

Erica Taylor: It was the middle of the night.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: It was the middle of the night, several things like that. So that was one of the things, to get a hold of the message before -- earlier -- was the main weakness. One of the major strengths what we did was releasing statements. The press conference went really well, once the AP reporter heard from the press conference from the president and you know, the vice president of student affairs. Once that program went without a hitch, and once they, once we talked about releasing a statement and that kind of thing, that information was of course, then circulated all over the world. I think that the press conference went really well, and us communicating through the statements that we released went well.

Erica Taylor: Sounds great. And then overall did you consider this situation a success? How you handled it a success -- not the shooting!

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Yes. Communication-wise it was a success, that we got statements out there, we got information to the students, we got information to the parents, we communicated well with the media, we answered all the questions. So I think that was a success. And even when it comes up again, the people who list (?), though very rarely we may get a call.

But I think that it was -- also let me put this in there --

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: We had had the -- let me see, I can't chose that word right -- fortunately Virginia Tech had happened before us, and we had had the opportunity to hear from the communications team at Virginia Tech at a communicators conference. So we had heard about some of the things that they did, and how they implemented it, so we implemented some of those things, so that also, I think, helped.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: It's a horrible thing to say. But you know, just using all these experiences from colleagues of other communicators that dealt with a shooting, of course, on a completely different magnitude, but just in some of the things they implemented, we tried to do that.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. And my last question is is there anything we have not discussed that you may want to add, or that you think that is helpful for me to know?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that one of the major success stories that came out of this whole tragedy is that the gentleman who was the delivery man who was shot, he was an out-of-work chemist, and he was delivering pizza because he was out of work, and he now works here at the university in the chemistry department. I can get you those news stories on that too.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I think that that was a good story that came out of it. Also, it's a testament that, you know, he felt the university was safe, you know, that he came back and worked here. I think that those are some "feel good" stories that came out after the . And his wife is also a student here now.

So now those are some good stories that came out, and when those showed in the media, he talked about that, you know, he spoke to the young man and he told him, "You don't have to do this." You know, and "I'm going to pray for you, and pray with you," so I think that those stories once the media picked them up gave it a different twist, a different look, and even humanized the shooter. . .

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: . . . you know, because he was ill and this and that, and we tried to talk to him. So I think that the media covered that very well.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So do you think that they got good coverage of the positive...

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Aspects . . .

Erica Taylor: . . .aspects of what happened after the fact?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Absolutely.

Erica Taylor: And one other question, while we were talking. Do you know anything, or would you like to share anything about the shooter, why the shooting happened? Do you know anything about that?

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: I do not know. I know he is now in a mental institution. That story should be in here about that. I cannot speak for certain as to why he did that or why this happened. We always have to take into account at universities, there is a saying in something this week of just so many different personalities, so many people, so many different lifestyles coming together living in the same space from so many different places, that a lot of things can happen. So we have to be vigilant in protecting our students, and the students protecting themselves, and knowing where they can get help, and communicating that well to the students and the parents.

Erica Taylor: Okay, sounds great. That's all I have. If you don't have anything, I think we're done.

Mrs. Yuri Milligan: Cool, no.

Erica Taylor: Thank you.

336 typed lines, 470 lines, 4532 words

Interviewer: Erica Taylor
Interviewee: Ms. Eva K. Pickens
Director of Communications
Texas Southern University
Thursday, November 18, 2010

Erica Taylor: Okay, we're ready to go.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: A little bit about myself, I grew up in Opelousas, Louisiana. Attended Southern University, 1974. Graduated from Southern in three years, 1977.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Went to work as a newspaper reporter against all advice I'd received from my family because everybody in my family were educators.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Teachers, master teachers, principals. So they wanted me to have a recession-proof career.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It was boring; that was boring to me. Went to Southern on an English scholarship and discovered the wonderful world of journalism. So immediately started courses in writing, and publications, and photography, and loved it because people say no two days are the same, no two hours are the same in this business.

Erica Taylor: That is very true.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, and so I loved that. Started out in newspaper, stayed there five years as a daily newspaper reporter. won several awards for feature writing. Once I got the hang of things, it became easier, because people have different ways of saying things.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so in 1977, can you imagine I was the first African American reporter in Opelousas?

Erica Taylor: I can imagine. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You know, shock. So they used to send me to the Rotary Club meetings, the Kiwanis Club meetings, and they were still closing doors in our faces.

Erica Taylor: Right. What paper was that, that you were working on?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It was called the *Opelousas Daily World*, and it's an affiliate of the *New York Times*.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We won a lot of writing awards, and at that time, Associated Press and United Press Association awards, because we were always entering contests. And all it did was it gave me an opportunity to get better, because they will critique your writing, and give you a summary back. And so stayed there five years, which was probably what I had. My goal in mind was to stay there five years.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When I first started they were giving me the crummy beats like obituaries, the police beat, the school board. But like they said, take lemons and make lemonade.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I enjoyed it. I got to know the people I met. Worked with the folk. And they gave me a story one time. And I told this even to my classes when I teach sometimes as an adjunct professor. I said, "They gave me an assignment to do a story on a 100 year old oak tree."

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I was furious! I was furious. I said, "A *tree*, when everybody is doing all this other award winning stuff?"

Erica Taylor: I want to talk to people!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I want to talk to people. So I went out to look at the tree, just angry as hell. Went out to take a look at the tree, and this little old white lady came out, and she said, "What you doing, baby?"

And I said, "Well, the *Daily World* gave me an assignment to do a story on this tree," and I said, "and I don't see a thing to write about."

And she said, "You see those names carved in the tree?"

And I remembered we use to do like "Eva K. love John Adams" or whatever. And she said, "That couple still lives right over there across the street." Hey, Girl!

Erica Taylor: Right! There's your story!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I'm loving it now. So I go over there, and I talk to them, and they talk about what was going through their minds at that time, and they were madly in love, still 65 years later married.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And pointed me out to some other people, and stuff, and I won a third place Associated Press award for that story.

Erica Taylor: Wow, amazing.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, so my husband's job moved him to Houston.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Oh, God, I tried not to leave. I was comfortable at home.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The pay was not all that well, but my family was there, and I was comfortable; I felt like I was growing.

Erica Taylor: Right. Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I was learning a lot. 'Cause you know in a small town, you get to be the news director, the editor, the society editor.

Erica Taylor: Yes, yes.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we were doing it all. But anyway, moved here. Started working on my Masters in Public Relations Management, I thought.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: 'Cause I said, I'm moving to Houston. There is a wealth of opportunity there. Came to Texas Southern, and they did not have a degree program in public relations management.

Erica Taylor: Uh-oh.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But they told me I could create one.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so that's kind of what we did. I started working here as a writer-editor. And they were amazed that I had come with credentials.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Tier sheets, by-lines...

Erica Taylor: Wow, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yes. And so, enjoyed it. Took, I mean... They used to call me "the press release lady" because I was shooting out press releases. I had been on the other side and we had to have a story at 7:00 o'clock every morning. It wasn't, "My car broke down and I couldn't get ... No, the editor would just put his hands in your tray, and you'd better come up with a story. I used to try to keep one on hold just in case I ran into a dry spell, and so I always met my deadlines.

Erica Taylor: The ever *(can't understand)*

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. So coming here was nothing. All they wanted me to do was identify the positive news and feed it to media.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, hey, I'm like Okkkaay. What I found when I got here, though, was that was --

Erica Taylor: What were you saying, I'm sorry?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That was, I came to work at Texas Southern the first time in 1983. And it was interesting because outside of the HBCU circle, nobody knew about Texas Southern.

Erica Taylor: Right. That's common.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: How?

Erica Taylor: I've been doing my research on HBCU's and I found that a lot. That if you ask somebody for directions, and they can't even -- they are like, "that's here? That's in this town?"

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I know! "Is that here?" Right!

Erica Taylor: That's common.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It was very shocking to me. So I had to do my research and find out what all forms of media outlets were here, and what I found --

Erica Taylor: Especially in such a big city.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- it's such a huge... And there were like 33 radio stations.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Oh, eight weekly newspapers, right here in the immediate community. There were two major papers at the time, the *Houston Post*, and *The Houston Chronicle*. *The Houston Post* has since, you know, been closed or whatever. Five major television stations. I'm loving it. I'm loving it! I'm like -- so immediately I knew that we had to build an image for Texas Southern. So I started sending press releases, and it was unbelievable. They, because we have other major universities, they were shocked to learn of the things going on at Texas Southern.

The only thing they used to hear was when something -- some kind of tragedy happened, they realized there was a Texas Southern University. But they didn't know that we had an airway science program, and that eight of the main management personnel in management at the largest airport were TSU graduates.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You know, students didn't know they could attend here and become pilots or aviation managers. We have got partnerships with the Port of Houston because the port is afraid that their workforce is aging so quickly. They did a partnership with Texas Southern, and as soon as we could graduate them, they have got jobs.

Same thing in pharmacy, same thing in law. But we were known in the 70s and 80s for our law school and our pharmacy school.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Now we're beginning to be known for the aviation program, the business program, public affairs.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So almost anything that deals with minority issues, we're doing research in those areas. So that's what elevating our image.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And our graduates are all over the place. It's amazing! We have got Yolanda Adams, who's a Grammy award winner.

Erica Taylor: I didn't know that!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, Yolanda is our graduate! Michael Strahan, who is now an ESPN commentator. Kirk Wheeler is an international jazz artist.

Erica Taylor: Learn something new!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So very, very rich in history. We're a little bit younger than the other colleges, like Southern and Grambling, I think, and Fisk, and all of those, they were founded in the 1800s. Texas Southern, we were claiming 1947, because that's when the name changed to Texas Southern University.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: If we go back to the Houston College for Negroes name, we were actually here in 1927, which would make us 83 years old.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we just changed that designation this year, to go back and claim those 20 years.

Erica Taylor: Okay, as you should.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, yeah, right. And so that makes Texas Southern and University of

Houston the same age.

Erica Taylor: Okay. That's interesting as well.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Just in case. But I've worked for, this is my seventh president. I started here when I was like 24 years old.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Real excited about it, because it was an opportunity to build the brand.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And the five presidents were very easy going. Because almost any creative idea that we came up with to build Texas Southern, they were fine with.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And I worked through the time when we had our first female president. That was very exciting.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Very exciting. She only lasted two years though.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because they didn't think she was making a whole lot of effort to be a part of the community. And at Texas Southern you have to, because the community feels they own us.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They helped to build our very first building, the Fairchild Building, by buying bricks.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So they all paid a dollar for these bricks. So they proudly tell that their children.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Who now, who remember, and refuse to be left out of any major decisions.

Erica Taylor: Okay!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we've come --

Erica Taylor: I bet that's a challenge.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we've got to take a different approach when we make major decisions, because they have got to feel like they are a part of that decision. They have to have buy-in, so some of the times when the presidents make these major decisions and then make the announcements afterwards, we get a lot of push-back.

Erica Taylor: Yeah.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So it takes them about a year to find out that the community is very much a part of Texas Southern. The alumni, even though with their limited giving, they want to be included in the major decisions, and we have now mastered that.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So do you feel like when these major decisions are being made, or even thought of, that you have input?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I do.

Erica Taylor: Or what do you think your level of input is?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I do. You know, and as each president comes around, I've got to kind of assist them, get used to their managing style. Get used to their writing style; make them comfortable with me because I'm from a lot of past administrations.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. So I've got to be careful about my, what do I want to call it, my counsel to them, okay. Because even with this president, it has taken me a little while, because he came in with a mindset that he was going to change the entire culture.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And clearly it needed changing.

Erica Taylor: In what ways?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It was open admission.

Erica Taylor: I read that.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, and that was making it difficult to get the graduation rate that we wanted because we were taking all of these kids, with all these issues. They had a GED. Some of these kids, and really, I'm telling you. I worked here for several years, and I didn't know that you could get into college with less than a 2.0 grade point average.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So when he came in, and we work this side of the campus and not that side. So when he came in, I was like, well you know, we were all in agreement. But how do you do that without getting pushed back, because a lot of people came to Texas Southern in the past ill-prepared for college. But TSU gave them a second chance.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We don't have that luxury anymore though. Because the legislature is now saying we're not giving you money for remedial education. Let them go to the community college for that.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we did a town hall. Came in and let everybody air their gripes or whatever. But we had a core group of people who understood that we didn't have a luxury to do it anymore. Because we were going to miss, I think it was around $11,000,000.

Erica Taylor: Oh, wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: If we didn't change it. So it's all tied to productivity. Monitoring productivity.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we changed the admission standards, and right away we noticed a more serious student because even the students, some of the students in the town hall meeting expressed the fact that they did not want to come to college with somebody they had to spend time teaching them to read, teaching them to work the math problems, and so in our classes, we had those students who had done everything they could to prepare for college. Then we had those who were kind of midway, and then you've got these over here, who woke up one morning, and said, "I can get into Texas Southern!"

Erica Taylor: I'm going to go!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Absolutely no interest. Matter of fact, after the 20th class day, and they got their refund check, we didn't have to worry about them anymore, but still they counted it against our failure rate.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so Dr. Rutley comes in, gets a lot of push-back from one or two people who had given, had experienced that second chance. And so they were advocates for those people because they thought that there were more of themselves out there.

So we weathered that when we started to show them the retention rate because we were recruiting 1500 new freshmen. 1500 to 2000 new freshmen.

Erica Taylor: What is the current size of your student body? Do you know?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: 9500.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we had to grow back to that.

Erica Taylor: Wow. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: At one time we lost about 4000.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we had to grow back to that. But we're getting a more serious student, and we can see in this new sophomore class, they are not as rowdy, they are going to class. Once upon a time the kids weren't buying books. Because they were here to party, have a good time, but now you're seeing kids going to class, okay..actually reporting faculty members who are not showing up for the classes.

Erica Taylor: Wow, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we see a more serious student in just two years.

Erica Taylor: Okay, well that's good. So the open admissions closed...

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The open admissions closed.

Erica Taylor: In what? That would be the fall of 2008?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: 2008. Mmhmm.

Erica Taylor: I just want to be sure I have it correct.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: 2008, so now we're seeing those students as sophomores.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Our retention rate which was about 20%, is now 70%.

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we're not losing as many of them anymore. The president implemented a student success piece to their first year that was missing. He is giving them academic counseling in each one of the colleges and schools, and he is giving every freshman and sophomore student a mentor. So that piece was missing. So now we feel like we have a nurturing environment for those students because a lot of our students are first generation, first generation college students.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They don't know the process. The other piece he has put in place is a summer academy, whereas if your grades are not as strong as they should be, say for instance, he has taken the ACT to a 17 because we had kids who were doing 12 and 15 on the ACT, and 8- or 900 on the SAT.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They favor ACT for some reason. But now he has those standards in place. That comes along with a 2.0, 17 on the ACT or 900 on the SAT. Those are the standards. And every year, he wants to edge that up, so next year, we go to a 2.2.

Erica Taylor: Right, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And then on a 20 on the ACT, and a 1200 on the SAT. So we're taking it up little by little. The beauty of what he has done with the summer academy --

Erica Taylor: Do you use the, for the SAT, do you use the new one or the old one?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The new one.

Erica Taylor: Okay, got it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We use the new one.

Erica Taylor: Just wanted to make sure, because I know that some of the schools haven't converted, or they convert either way based on the student.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. And it's interesting that the students really didn't understand the SAT.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That's why a lot of them prefer the ACT. It has a nice round number, but the SAT you have to take three scores. Yeah.

Erica Taylor: I remember. It hasn't been *that* long. I was on the old system though.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, okay. And then with the summer academy, if they fall below, the summer academy is an eight week academy at Texas Southern, and the commitment on their part is $250, so if you are paying this $250, you're more serious.

Yeah, we offered it to them free, but they played around. So now we see, again, a serious student. And if they cannot make it through the summer academy, we have this 2+2 program with the community college. So you go your first two years to the community college, and Texas Southern will accept all of your courses. So that's working out. A lot of changes, but once we ironed all the kinks out, and communicated that to the community, then they were like, "oh, not bad!"

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. That sounds like we're making some good changes.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We're making some wonderful changes. It really is an exciting time.

Erica Taylor: Good progress.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Then Dr. Rutley comes in, and I think the board made a wonderful decision in getting somebody that understands the financials. We were always in trouble because of our finances. Dr. Rutley said it was like not being able to balance your checkpoint.

Erica Taylor: That's common as well.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right! So the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools slapped a probation sanctions on us, and gives us about a year to turn it around, and Dr. Rutley goes, "I'm going to turn it around. I'm a CPA." We had to find the monies first. We had the money. It was just in all different --

Erica Taylor: Different places.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- pockets, and they had designated it for things that were very specific, so Dr. Rutley had to pull those out of those different budgets, and put them back where they belonged, and he got that straight. He had independent audit come in and said, "Okay, now you're ready," so we did a self-assessment. But the auditors came back in, and said, and I remember. We rejoiced because we were taken off probation. And they came back and said, "Where is your state financial report?" Well, we didn't know that we were supposed to provide one because it was coming up in January.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we didn't have it, but we learned since that time, that we could have requested it for the purposes of the Southern Association. So they put us back on probation.

Erica Taylor: Oh no!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So it just deflated all of us, we were like, and it was just that we didn't have that state letter saying that were okay.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So in the next six months they took us back off probation. That was a miss-step that we kind of shook us all up.

Erica Taylor: Learning experience.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, it was because Dr. Rutley prides himself with being the financial guru, and he has. He has turned this place around. He said, "Now we can operate like a business." You know where your monies are. You are spending them where they are supposed to be, you can balance your checkbook. But what I learned in learning him right away. He explained coming to TSU like juggling eight balls.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said, "I wanted it so badly because I know I could I fix it."

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said, "Just put some structure in place, bring some good people who want to work hard, and I can do it." But he said, when he first got here he said, understand what I found when I got here. They were talking about putting TSU under conservatorship.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said they were even talking about it, going so far as closing it down. He said athletics was getting ready to be, receive 32 sanctions from nc2a (?) so they are about to pull all of your scholarships. He said, you couldn't balance a checkbook. He said, you had alumni who disowned the university. Enrollment had dropped 30%.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so he said, "Okay, what am I going to tackle first?"

Erica Taylor: Right!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That's when I understood what he was up against, and that's how we opened the doors of communication, because I started to tell him what it was he needed. I said you've got to get community by you, and you've got to go to community. He didn't want to go to the community until he had something to say.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So now everywhere I point him to, he will go. We did a lot of press releases, a lot of editorials to let people know what was going on, a lot of town hall meetings, and focus groups, and advisory committees because we had to include these folk. So even if we had already made up in our minds what it was we were going to do, we had to get buy-in from them. And so now they felt like they helped us make a decision, and move TSU forward.

Erica Taylor: Okay. They have to feel like they are a part of the team.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, because a lot of the ministers -- there are some mega-churches here -- a lot of those ministers are graduates.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I'm telling you we're rich, rich, rich in history. We have just got to remember to tap into those, because here are the people that can send you the students you need.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, the churches drive a lot, a lot of weight.

Erica Taylor: Cycle.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, the other thing, we have got a partnership with the Tom Joyner

Foundation.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: In September, we were the school of the month, but we had been doing some things with Tom Joyner and the Magic 102. I have great relationships with the media. Great relationships.

Erica Taylor: Excellent.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And that happens because the good, the bad or the ugly, I'm going to be honest. They can call me at home. They know that. Any time of night. When the six people were shot on campus a year ago, they called me like 10 or 11:00 o'clock that night.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And I knew we had an event going on near the campus. It really wasn't on the campus. It was near the campus. And so, folk wanted me to say that it wasn't our event because it wasn't on campus. I opted to take a different route, and say, I wanted to remind them, of course, that the campus was safe, and it was unfortunate that something that was meant for good, because it was a voter registration rally Trey Day concert or something, and somebody, a drive-by shooting occurred.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. So even though it wasn't ours, it was near our campus, and we take full responsibility. I never try to hide. I always take full responsibility, and inform them of the particulars, that it wasn't a TSU event, however our students were at that event. We hoped that they all were safe. The TSU campus is safe, but I couldn't take the position it just was not a TSU event. So they kind of appreciated that, and even though, I went on campus. I went on camera. Because it wasn't ours. It wasn't a TSU sanction event, but because of some of our kids were hit in that event, we had to kind of calm the parents down.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we sent out a campus wide blast, and we could hit the kids on they phones, their text message.

Erica Taylor: So you have the emergency text messaging?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, emergency text messaging, we call the Mere 3 Emergency System, then we do the monitors. All the kids have access to gmail. They all get gmail accounts. That night we had to do all of those things, because parents... And parents still, they were going to call, and want to know were their kids hit. We couldn't release the names of kids who were hit, but we could at least tell them that it wasn't theirs.

So that was that incident, and in a day it was gone, because we had communicated to everybody we could possibly communicate with. And kept giving updates, and telling them to listen to our radio station and visit our web site for updates. We constantly gave them updates. And the same

thing with the young man who was killed not far from the campus.

He was our student, but here again, he was at a house party.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And got into an altercation with a guy who was a non-student, but we had to deal with that.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That was a tough one.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That was a tough one. He was a military kid. Really had no business at the party. His friends had talked him into going. He really didn't like that kind of scene. And so that was a tough one for us, but again, got in front of it right away. Told the media everything they needed to know, took them to the site, had the parents of the kid, the father who was a police officer, and he lived in Beaumont not far away, and so had all of them, and the president, you know, he really took that one hard, because it was the very kind of student we're trying to recruit.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Honor student, came prepared --

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. Yeah. So we had some hits.

Erica Taylor: Right. I see. I didn't even know about all of them.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we had some hits. But because we communicate very quickly, and because I guess, I'm a trusted face. I am not going to hide the truth; I'm going to tell them the truth. If it's something that happened because we made a miss-step then I apologize profusely. The president doesn't have a problem going on camera. I will brief him, and we will go on camera, and you know, tell it like it is.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. But we did a lot, a lot of things to, we do a lot of things to build our image. We do a lot of community outreach. Any time there is an opportunity for Texas Southern to participate in anything, we have our faculty there to serve as experts, and we really take advantage of holidays. Veterans Day we had this big salute to the veterans. Just did it last Saturday at the football game.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We do a Veterans Day Feast on the campus. Christmas, we do the same

thing, we do a toy drive for the kids, and then we do a big community variety show. So we do that. That gives us high visibility. We did the Obama America.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we got a letter from MSNBC that said that it was the largest African American audience in their history.

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because we had this discussion on race relations, and MSNBC came and interviewed Ms. Matthews and they did three shows from here.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And honey, every time you would hear, "Live from the campus of Texas Southern University," you couldn't pay for that kind of publicity.

Erica Taylor: Oh, no. That's excellent.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That propelled us to another situation, because all of our graduates came out of the woodworks and they were talking about what a good discussion it was, what a good town hall meeting, and we looked good, they said.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because MSNBC came in and transformed the campus, totally transformed the campus.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we said how do we continue to build on that momentum. So then we had, we have continued those race relations talks. It has escalated into an agenda for the African American community. To where we're talking about economics, poverty, health care disparities, childhood obesity, and we're now having those panel discussions, and we want to come back and visit those one year later. Because one of the things a lot of the organizations were doing, they would have these summits and these conferences, and they would talk about it, and then nothing would get done.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Well, we want to take it and leverage it now into research.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, those are one of the things that we were -- we weren't at the level that we wanted to be with our faculty research, but now we're doing a whole lot better. Faculty research has increased.

Faculty were fearful of talking to the media too. So one of the other things we did, we provided a faculty training with role playing, and that kind of thing, because they were very afraid of the media, because during the years, a lot of their comments would be taken out of context.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we have trained them to speak to the question, and do not offer anything else. Do not elaborate. So they are better. And now the media calls on a number of our faculty for comment, and a lot of them serve as political analysts. They talk about black-on-black crime, so whenever they need statistics, and comments, and research on what's happening with minority youth, we do a lot, a lot of things with cradle to the grave, including the penitentiary, and we have got a lot of research going on. What does he call it? Prison privatization.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have got a gentleman here who is the expert on that. We have got the expert on urban planning and transportation, aviation. We talked about that. A lot of study with NASA, collaborations with NASA, the Port of Houston. Very good time. Very exciting time to be a part of Texas Southern.

Erica Taylor: Excellent. That's all good news.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah.

Erica Taylor: Well, not all good.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we have had some ups and downs. What I've done -- this will give you a brief synopsis of the two years that Dr. Rutley has been in office.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we have outlined everything that has taken place. And if there is anything else that we need to expound on, you let us know.

What we did too, we surveyed the students to find out who from a celebrity status, they would like to invite to the campus to talk to them about having to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, because we could tell them, we can talk, we can talk, you need to set your priorities. You're responsible for the decisions you make.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We can talk to them 'til, like my mom used to say, "'til we're blue in the face," and they won't listen to us. Guess who they wanted to hear from? Idris Elba, Jeff Johnson, and Sheryl Lee Ralph.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we went and got them.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We went and we got them, and we had a round table with each one of them, that's a part of the mentoring project that Dr. Rutley talks about, and so they have given them some challenges. These are our freshmen students. They have issued some challenges to them, and amazingly, these entertainers are happy to do it, and will come back and check on them one year later.

Erica Taylor: Excellent.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Mmhmm. Our kids need a different kind of motivation. We were surprised that the athletes, or the hip hop rappers were not at the top of their list.

Erica Taylor: Very interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But remember, this is that new set of students.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The students of old probably would have. But look at this. TSU's nanotechnology project flew in space on the last mission.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The Apollo mission. We were real excited about, so that garnered a lot of attention for us. Unfortunately we can't get the news clips. We cannot get the electronic media. We can get the print media. And when Dr. Rutley came, they talked about change coming to TSU and U of H. This is yours to keep, in case you need to go over it.

Erica Taylor: Oh, okay. The whole book?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The whole book!

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Hey, girl! We're *(can't understand)*

Erica Taylor: I was going to ask you if I could make copies of some of these things!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Oh, please! We take care of all of this stuff for you.

Erica Taylor: Excellent. Thank you very much.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Our enrollment fees after losing a couple of students weekly, we have bounced back pretty quickly. We thought it was going to take four to five years to bounce back, but it didn't. It took two yours.

Erica Taylor: Ahead of schedule.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We're ahead of schedule! Yeah. Tradition changing at black colleges, and

this shows our diversity increasing. We're going now after the Asian, Hispanic, and white population. You will find the largest increase in diversity occurs at our law school and our pharmacy school.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It's amazing. They will take advantage of that. Our pharmacy school graduates, graduate with a degree in this hand, and a job offer in that hand, and they are recruiting them like they're recruiting athletes.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They have 10- and $20,000 sign-in bonuses.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We cannot graduate pharmacists fast enough.

Erica Taylor: I must have gone into the wrong industry.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, I say that all the time. Now I love the journalism, I love the work and stuff, but I didn't know that the really the people who make the money are that advertising sales execs.

Erica Taylor: Oh yeah.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I wish I had known that.

Erica Taylor: But you have to, I think, being a salesperson is a gift.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah.

Erica Taylor: And that's not for me.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I couldn't. Right, I think..

Erica Taylor: But if you've got it though,it's --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: At this point in my life I probably could do it, but fresh out of college, I couldn't do it. I was too afraid of people.

We're recruiting Matthew Knowles, and folk like him, and they will come and teach us adjunct professors.

Erica Taylor: Oh, excellent!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And he was kind of nervous about it first. He just unveiled all of his secrets in one semester.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So I said well what is he going to give them next semester, but he did come back because he enjoyed it so. And he said he has to have something else to do when he finishes the business of music. So he's teaching a class in our journalism department called the Business of Music. And so he's just giving it to them from the ground up. And you should see, we have students who were not even interested in becoming journalist in this class.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That may morph into a continuing education or something like that.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because we're getting a lot of people interested in what he has to say. Really interesting. I've gone to three of the classes, and it's a lot, a lot of information he can share with them that will keep them from making those same mistakes.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: This is one of our graduates. A lot of times in the weekly newspapers they can write whatever they want so we afford them the opportunity to do that. This was *Ebony,* where we did a feature in the Michael Jackson edition on Yolanda Adams, on graduates. And *The Chronicle* talked about giving the students a second chance to make the grade.

Erica Taylor: Excellent.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so the students talked about what it took to get them here, and how they are happy TSU had that summer academy to give them another chance. So you can go through all of this stuff, yeah, we're the press release queens.

Erica Taylor: Wow. But they are getting media coverage though.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. This was a story about our students who led the first sit-in. They celebrated 50 years of that, and it was nine of our students.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They all came back for the 50 year celebration. That was so touching.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we reenacted the march which was a two mile march from the campus to what used to be the wine garden on one of our major streets, and the community joined in. They thought that was so brave of them at that time.

Erica Taylor: It was.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Here is Idris Elba talking with the president. He wanted to do a round table. He wanted to do a one-on-one with him first to find out why he was so appealing to the students, the male and female students. And then we -- he told them, he said, "You have got to be

kidding me!" He said, "You can go to college, *for free?*" He said, "All you have to do is make the grade?" He said, "I wish in my country that we were afforded such an opportunity."

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Jeff Johnson, on the other hand, he hit them from another standpoint. He told them they were not qualified to sit at his table. He said, "What gives you the right to come and offer your opinion to me?" He said, "When I was first coming out of college. . . " He wanted to go and work for a structured organization. He really wanted to go and work for a white organization.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But they weren't having it, he said, so he ended up at NAACP, and the elder sitting in the car told him to sit there until to he was asked to speak. He said so he just absorbed everything, and one day they asked his opinion, he said, three years later.

Erica Taylor: Wow. That's perseverance!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he told our students, we give them access too quickly. He said we bring them up to sit them at the tables as leaders, and they haven't experienced anything. He asked, "What Goliath have you slewed?"

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said, "Go slay a dragon or something, and then come back and talk to me." He said, "Because a lot of your families have given up their mortgage, their lifelong dreams, to give you the opportunity to come to college, and here you are acting a fool. You want to cut up and you want to challenge the president about parking or housing or . . ." He did. He had them crying. He did.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So Dr. Rutley was right. Now he's our biggest recruiter; our president is our biggest recruiter.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: What he found when he came here, was that the students had heard all of the negative stuff about TSU in the past so in order to maintain our budget, he had to recruit outside of the state. So he brought in a whole bunch of kids from Michigan because he's from Benton Harbor, Michigan. They were proud that our local boy made good. They followed him here. Thirty of them the first semester.

Erica Taylor: Excellent.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So now he probably has 100 of them. And now the local students are coming. So he had to kind of use reverse psychology on them. These are some of the ads that we do for our online programs to make them very easy. Then we honor our alumni, because those

that have remained true to Texas Southern, they send their money, they participate in events, these are the ones that we have got to get buy-in from.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: See that was the Board of Registration rally that went sour. But then we start recruiting at the early age for our aviation school.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, all the way in Nigeria. Once upon a time, TSU, we probably still are, we were the largest producers of Nigerians receiving their college degrees. 30%.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we're going to establish an alumni chapter there.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Um-hmm. The largest gift, surprisingly, TSU's 83 years old, and the largest gift from an alumnus has been a million dollars, and he's a Nigerian.

Erica Taylor: Wow, that's interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. So a long way to go to raise money for our radio station. We have great mediums to get our word out though. We have the Comcast cable channel. We do an Access Community Channel, and then our radio station reaches 300,000 listeners every week so that's a good starting point for us. This is our signature event that we host every year, hosted by the president. "Calling on You, counting on you," and we have a summit for the alumni to tell us what direction we should be headed. Everything from recruitment, to tutoring, to fundraising. This is our national alumni president.

Hurricane Ike. That propelled us to a different height.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because FEMA came in, dumped some pods and left. The only folk who were on campus at the time was our basketball team. They fed 2000 people an hour in the hurricane. So a lot of people still remember that. They were out of school, they were out of water, they were... So our basketball team took the lead, opened those packages.

There's the shooting that I talked to you about. Cross the debt off of its "to do" list. So you will find a lot of, this is when they slapped us back on. Then I did an editorial because people were saying we were not credited and all of this craziness, so it worked. So you will see the editorial.

Erica Taylor: Had to dispel the myth?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. Did you hear about mural project?

Erica Taylor: I have not.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When you came up you noticed the paintings on the wall?

Erica Taylor: Yes.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That is a final project for our students enrolled in the art program.

Erica Taylor: Okay. It's beautiful.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They find them a spot. They come up with a theme. Their faculty advisor approves their theme, and they paint away. Now lately, the new students, they don't have a theme. There is no method to their madness, so they kind of just paint stuff. Cars, and hip hop, and chains, and guns, and whatever.

So Dr. Rutley had some visitors from a major industry, energy industry, on campus and some of the murals started to fall off the wall while he was bringing his guests up, because they are 5o years old.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so he had asked the finance department to come in and appraise the murals, evaluate them, find out which ones could be preserved, and he gave them two years to do it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They didn't.

Erica Taylor: Uh-oh.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he ordered two of them painted them over, the two that had embarrassed him. And all hell broke lose, because he didn't check with the alumni, he didn't check with the community, and so for a week, we had to endure the negative press on the murals.

But it gave us an opportunity to tell the public about the murals and talk to them about how old they were, and the fact that they are deteriorating, because look at this -- you cannot even tell what it is anymore. And to start a mural preservation campaign. And luckily Tom Joyner is into murals.

Dr. Rutley put up the first $50,000. We have since found out that it's going to cost over $1,000,000 to preserve them all.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he's going to hire a conservator to come in and evaluate them, and see which ones are worth preserving, and then just, we're going to have to do away the others, because we're not going to be able to afford them. They are talking about it will cost about $25,000 per mural to preserve it.

We're interested in preserving the Biggers murals.

Erica Taylor: All right, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because those are very, very valuable. These are our talks on the state of black Houston. So TSU kind of serves as the hub for everything major. The Haiti rally. Our students took the lead in getting nonperishable goods and sending there.

We have very good relationships with elected officials too.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have seen in the district of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and we pick up the phone and call her for almost everything. And the same thing for our state level, and our city council. Three of our members of our nine member city council board are TSU graduates.

Erica Taylor: Awesome.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we have a lot, a lot of friends.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So you feel like they are responsive?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They are very responsive, yeah. This is our signature event where we raise money for, every year we pick a different college, school or program.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And it's called the TSU honors. And we bring in our alumni from those particular colleges and schools and we honor them. They get all dressed up and raise lots of money. So you will see that in there.

Dr. Freeman is director of our debate team. He was the gentleman who trained Denzel Washington and his cast for the movie, *The Great Debaters.*

Erica Taylor: Wow.

So he came over, and he spent two weeks with Dr. Freeman. Dr. Freeman tells the story, he said, his secretary, he said, "Denzel Washington is on the phone."

He said, "Yeah, right." He said so he didn't call him back.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he said the next two days, the secretary said, "Dr. Freeman, Denzel Washington wants you to call him back."

He said, "Is this a joke or what?" So he calls him back, and he says, "It *sounded* like Denzel Washington."

Erica Taylor: He does have a distinct voice.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. And they agreed to meet at one of the hotels downtown, and Dr. Freeman said that he showed up on time. He said, "Let me just go." You know. He showed up on time, and he said he didn't see anybody, he waited in the lobby, and a little while later Denzel was in disguise with his little baseball hat on his head, and they went out to a secluded place, and yeah. Um-hmm.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Now what this shows, this is interesting. Every quarter, we have got to report what we're doing on the local, national, and international level in the media. The vice president over this area came from the University of Houston. She had a staff of 22 people.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I have a staff of three. And she goes, because we had to get media measurement.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So this shows the number of shows in a quarter, talk shows that we appear on, so we have to have a matrix, because a lot of times even businesses, and especially historically black colleges, see our jobs as fluff.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we always have to measure what we do, and have, and we list the stories so that we will know. "TSU to land back on probation." We had 26 hits, but it was negative.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we a lot, a lot of positives, and you will find a few negatives. The national media market, the top three areas of distribution for Texas Southern, Texas, California, and Louisiana.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And then the Texas cities: Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio. So you will see probably two of those. I think we only put two in here.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But they always compare us, University of Houston, total reach, Rice University, total reach, and then our total reach was on this front page right here.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So even with our little staff of three, we're hanging in there. We should do with our total. We should put it first. So even with our little total ...

Erica Taylor: How are those numbers tabulated? I mean, I know that the articles and everything are counted, but as far as like determining what the tone is, I mean, I can imagine some of them are obvious, but determining your total reach.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: There's a matrix we subscribe to called Millwater, and they measure the total reach.

Erica Taylor: So it's a service that you subscribe to?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It's a service.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Yeah.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we figured if we are going to constantly be asked, we'd better go ahead and take $5000 of our $15,000 budget...

Erica Taylor: Right. Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we need relationships, otherwise we couldn't make it. Because they don't put a lot of money in these areas --

Erica Taylor: Very important...

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- so you have to leverage relationships.

Erica Taylor: Of course.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And you will see back here.

Erica Taylor: I am just interested in the software. It counts your hits and everything?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It counts our hits.

Erica Taylor: Interesting. I used to work in a PR office in Hampton University.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay!

Erica Taylor: We used to do all of that by hand, especially even a long time ago, before I even got out of school, my very first internship, all I did for a summer was count *(Can't understand her.)*

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When I first started working, I used to have to clip them and count them, and measure them, and how many inches.

Erica Taylor: Yes, I did that.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I was so glad to see that service. Now they want the electronic media. I

want it, but that's another $5000.

Erica Taylor: I got ya.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We need it, but we have not figured out how to grab it.

Erica Taylor: Do they send you these, well not these, but the news clippings and things? Is that included, or do you do that yourselves?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We do most of them ourselves, but they will send us the major.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Others we have got to do ourselves, so we kind of merge them. But I want that electronic piece, because once you view it and it's gone. It disappears. And so we're going to have to subscribe to a place called TBIs or something to get it, because we have a lot of electronic media.

So I told them what I do every year, I take this --

Erica Taylor: I think there is a way --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: To get it?

Erica Taylor: Yeah, a couple of ways that are either free or very inexpensive. I think you can set like a Google setting, I think Google analytics or something like that, you can set it to feed you all of your news features --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Really?

Erica Taylor: -- the name of your institution, and then if you have the full version of the Adobe web site, you have to have the full version, but you can take any web site and make it a .pdf, and save it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I'm going to write this down!

Erica Taylor: So even if the link dies you can --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have been trying to do that!

Erica Taylor: No problem. So even if you have to purchase the Adobe, that's a one-time couple of hundred dollars.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So I have to have Adobe?

Erica Taylor: The full package.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The full package.

Erica Taylor: Any web site, you can make it into a .pdf and save it, that way if the link

dies, or they take it down, you know, you will have a copy. I think it's Google Analytics, but it's something where you can set it to pull. You know, you type in the name, and it will pull everything that features that name.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay. All right! That's a lot of information sharing!

Erica Taylor: I try!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, because we have been trying. We will see it. It will be on like the news tonight, and we will look at it, and forward it, then it's gone.

Erica Taylor: Yeah. They do take those links down, especially if it's something that is controversial, because then their PR people will come in and say, "Take that down. We want to rephrase the statement."

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So, very good. So this is yours to keep.

Erica Taylor: Thank you.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You're welcome.

Erica Taylor: I appreciate that.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So how much longer do you have?

Erica Taylor: Hopefully, I hope to be done next summer, in June.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Oh, good!

Erica Taylor: So, that's the goal.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Then the goal is to do what after that?

Erica Taylor: I really would like to be a professor.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Really?

Erica Taylor: Yeah, I worked for several years. I did my masters part time, and I worked in different types of public relations jobs. Government, non-profit, education, and then actually since I've been in this program, I've been working at corporate in Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana. I work in their corporate communications office in the summer as a writer.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Fantastic.

Erica Taylor: So I've kind of done the different industries and all that. But I got an opportunity to teach. Just, I kind of, I fell into it, and I loved it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: See?

Erica Taylor: And I found out that I like teaching it better than I like doing it. As much

as I love doing it. I love writing, and I would still like to freelance or do some consulting in the summer.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And see, you and I, we're very different. I'd rather do it than teach it. And so if you don't mind moving to Texas, Dr. Ward, who is my very **best** friend, he's the Dean of the Communications School, and he has journalism, and entertainment, and all of that stuff. He's growing it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He's growing it. 'Cause I think TSU's communications department is the second oldest --

Erica Taylor: Oh wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- of the HBCUs in the country. And so he just got back from NYU. He spent a week in New York, and he said their program has grown so, he came back just ...

Erica Taylor: I know, NYU is huge.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said their communications school occupies an entire building by itself, and it's six stories.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he's super, super excited. He called me last night, and a lot of his people are getting ready to retire because they have been here 30-35 years. And I know they feel the pressure to get out, because what are you teaching?

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. So he's going to grow that program, so you let me know. He just was talking to me about it, and he said, "You going to come back and teach for me?" And I'm like, "Nnn-uh".

Erica Taylor: Not your thing. And that's my thing. Like doing it full time, I get more personal.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I guess I get frustrated because I expect more from the students, and I really have to just calm down, and realize that not everybody is as passionate about this.

Erica Taylor: I think that, or the way I look at it, is they are still learning. They have not done this for years, so I cannot get upset maybe if their writing is not on the same level as mine because mine wasn't when I was their age.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They had to throw stuff back at me, and say it this way, and --

Erica Taylor: Right! You know, we have all got it marked up, so I have to remember that they are here, and I'm here, and we're both trying to get here so, not that I'm perfect --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You're right.

Erica Taylor: -- but I have a few more years on them.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You're right.

Erica Taylor: A little bit.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And I begin to seeing things that my parents were saying, that you keep that for when you are finished all of this running around, you might want to go back and do that. But I tell them I said I want a candy bouquet franchise. I'm going to be a business owner.

Erica Taylor: There you go.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When I leave here. But I do. I'm passionate about what I do.

Erica Taylor: That's good.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And my staff, they are coming along. *(extraneous noise)* basically (...Cannot understand her...) still overrides... That I give you all I got to make it to five (?)

Erica Taylor: And it's time to go.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We're never off. And they couldn't believe that I called them after the hurricane, and told them to come in. I said we have got to get the message out. We have to post to the web sites, and we have got to get statements out, and answer media calls.

"We can do that from home!"

I said, "Yeah, but, our office is up and running."

Erica Taylor: They want to see you. Right.

I've done that. The job that I had before I left Virginia, I lived in Virginia for seven years, I was on call. And I had to come home from a vacation one time. And I was just . . . It was a great experience, and I wouldn't trade it for the world, but I'm like, I don't know if I want to do this long term.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I remember on the newspaper side, that's what I said, five years after going out in the storm, and I will never forget this man got killed in a train wreck, and I had to take pictures of him still crumpled up in the car...

Erica Taylor: Uhh, no.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: For years I saw that image!

Erica Taylor: I bet!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: For years I saw that image, so I said well...

Erica Taylor: I didn't do anything that tragic. I worked for a city in their department of utilities. And I was their public information person, but anytime a water main broke, I had to be there, because it's good visual, especially for a TV journalist.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, it is.

Erica Taylor: They want to see the water spray, and they always want to talk to somebody.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Exactly. That happens here all the time. The girl name is Leticia Green, I believe, as we even, I even know her name now because it happens so often here.

Erica Taylor: And I'm like, I can't do this for a long time.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: How many people are out of water or whatever?

Erica Taylor: Exactly, how long will they be out of water, when are you going to fix it, and of course, the city didn't have enough money to revamp the whole system, so the city's mentality was we're going to fix them as they break. So how do you say that and make it positive?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, I was getting ready to say that. How do you say that and not cut the speaker off?

Erica Taylor: The real answer is unless you want us to raise your taxes, we cannot fix them all at one time. That was the real answer. You know, the most, non-user friendly answer.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Mmmhmmm

Erica Taylor: But you know, we had to say that this is an aging city, and some of these pipes are hundreds of years old, and these things happen. You know, we're in the process of renovation, the things you go through.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We will get to it as quickly as humanly possible.

Erica Taylor: Right. But the flat out answer was, if you don't want your taxes raised, we can't do all the pipes in the city at the same time.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And they don't. They don't want them raised!

Erica Taylor: Yeah, so...

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They don't want tuition raised.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The kids want the best. They want to be in rooms by themselves. They don't want any roommates.

Erica Taylor: Different type of student. I have a friend that works in admissions at Hampton, and you know, he said, he goes to recruit, and you're recruiting against some of the mainstream schools, and they say, well, I'd like to go to your school, but what do you mean you don't have apartments, what do you mean I can't have a suite my freshmen year? What do you mean your rooms don't come with flat screens? And he's like what? We were happy to have a phone!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I'm telling you...

Erica Taylor: But it's different. But it's a continuing effort, you know, to deal with that.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You almost wonder why you continue to build dormitories and that kind of thing when a lot, a large percentage of the population now, they are going to school online.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we're wondering if we're going to see a continual increase in that or do we -- right now, we're contemplating building dorms.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Well, what's the percentage of your students that live on campus? Do you know?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It's only 20%.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We're primarily a commuter campus which makes it difficult to get them, to give them the college experience.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But Dr. Rutley by 2015 would like to see 5000 of our students on campus.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Then you've got to build.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we've got to build.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I'm excited though. I'm excited about the field of communications, public relations management. I think we will always be needed. I think historically black colleges are just now beginning to see the value. When others, when things get tough at other universities, they beef up their PR departments. A lot of times we cut.

Erica Taylor: Right, they say, you must be failing, so...

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. So I think when Dr. Rutley was here before, he did not see the value. I think this year, because he's come full circle, he sees the value.

Erica Taylor: So it's a growing process.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It's a growing process.

Erica Taylor: So I think you told when I talked to you a while ago, you said you were here before, and then you came back. So when did you come back in this role? I know that you said you came in '83, and then when did you come back in this role?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I came back in this role in May of 2008.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Got it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, because Wendy Adair , who is the vice president, who he brought with him from U. of H., was in the same role as I was at Texas Southern the first time. And she remembered, she said the last press release she had gotten had come from me.

Erica Taylor: Oh wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And it was seven years before I got back. Excuse me one second. *(phone call)*

Erica Taylor: Okay, we're back on.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I came back because Wendy had the photographer whom I'd worked with before to find me. I was at a non-profit agency. It was a community action agency. Girl, if I did one press release a month, they were ecstatic. And don't get the media, don't get the television stations over there -- I wouldn't have to work anymore that year!

Erica Taylor: Oh!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But it was something missing. It wasn't enough to do. That's when I opened the business because Dr. Slade and I, who was the previous president who had gotten us into all this trouble, she and I didn't get along because she just would not listen. She wanted to spend money like she wanted to spend it. I would sit in the office around the table, and I would see bids come in, and I would see them white them out.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And put in... And I said, "I am NOT going to be party to this!" And so she said that we were not going in the same direction, and had me to tender, it was forced out, and I'm kind of glad it was. Because I went to the non-profit agency. Then when Ms. Adair came over to TSU, she came looking for me, because of the press releases. They had gone two years, TSU had gone two years, without a communications staff.

Erica Taylor: Oh, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we were in trouble. The media were just having a field day.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. So it has taken a while. And she said she was looking for somebody that was familiar with the lay of the land, already had the contacts with the media, and so I came in right away, and turned it around. And like, "We're glad you're back!"

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Mmmhmm. But my boss, the person that I came in working under, Chuck Smith, I will never forget, he said, "You've got to make yourself accessible," he said, "and factual, I don't care how badly it hurts, because they once they stop trusting you, it's going to reflect in how they treat you."

Erica Taylor: Right. Very true.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Mmmhmmm. Yeah.

Erica Taylor: Good advice. Well, let me go back and ask you two other areas.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay.

Erica Taylor: Then if you wanted to add anything else that's fine, because you've given me lots of excellent and vast resources and I really love it. But I wanted to go back and talk about the actual situation with the president that, with the money issues, but I want you to tell it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay.

Erica Taylor: And then I also just wanted to ask you some details about your office, how it runs. We will do the issue that happened first, then we will go back.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Which one?

Erica Taylor: With Slade.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay.

Erica Taylor: And what happened with that situation in your words?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Slade was charged with misappropriation of funds because it appeared that she utilized monies to handle some personal situations, and was not approved by the board. She had, there was a ceiling where she did not have to have board approval.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Anything under $100,000, she could make the decision. She was the sole signer on those. There were instances where she was purchasing things for her home, like for instance, there was a lawn maintenance contract, $186,000.

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That she signed.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Clearly it was supposed to be authorized by the board. Now she had an expense account. $50,000 a year. She also had unrestricted funds, and she didn't have to pay for furniture and lodging, and so her house -- everything, all of that, was paid for.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So she misappropriated monies, and they said that she abused her authority as a public servant even called presidents. So she was fired, and actually, they filed charges on her.

She got 10 years probation. Then Dr. Rutley comes in, and it's very difficult to find where the monies are now, because she had them in different budgets like we received some Office of Civil Rights money, because it was decided that Texas Southern University had not been getting equal money that the majority institutions got. So we received about $80,000,000 of what they called Office of Civil Rights money, but those monies were supposed to be used for very particular things, and she was using it to entertain and do some other things that she wasn't supposed to. So we had to find it. It was pockets of money.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It was here. It was just in different pockets. It was almost like they were intending to do something else with it, but didn't get a chance to.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So Dr. Rutley comes into a university that was almost broke. Then he pretty hurriedly put a plan together because of all his experiences everywhere else. He had served at University of Houston. He had served at Texas Southern before.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he knew the processes. And so he thinks that the Lord took him full circle to learn all this other stuff, then to come back and fix Texas Southern.

Erica Taylor: It happens.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He knew right away how to, what to look for, and what the expectations in Austin were, what the legislators were looking for. So they summoned him to Austin, and so here he goes, promising that he could fix it, and they said that's what the last president told us. And so they gave him two weeks to come back with a full staff. And so he pulled from the resources he had at University of Houston.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He was president, interim president, and chancellor there, and so there was a vice president there he had worked with. There was a fundraiser there he had worked with, so he offered them jobs, and they said yes.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so he goes back to Austin now armed with a staff, very diverse staff, and he goes back, and they say, okay, now you have two weeks to put a strategic plan together. You've got the staff, but you've got two weeks. So he said it was like being talked to like he was six years old.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But he said he had to take it for the betterment of Texas Southern. He said because he knew he could fix it. He knew. So he agreed that in two weeks he would come back with a strategic plan --

Erica Taylor: Wow!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- for the university.

Erica Taylor: That's a very quick turnaround for a strategic plan.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Very quick turnaround, very quick turnaround! And so came back, put the plan together, and in a year, it was like checking things off. Very nervous first year. He describes it as being in a war.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said it's like I've been in this war, and people are upset with me because I didn't pay attention to homecoming; I didn't pay attention to some other things, but it's like I've been in this war for a year and a half or two years, and he said, now I can finally start paying attention to some of those other things, but I had a lot of irons in the fire.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But we were right along with him, because we were like, you know, well, because he was like the delegator. Handing it off to somebody to do, so we were running.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He was doing some listening, but he knew what had to get to done.

Erica Taylor: Okay, so as a communications office, what were some of the things that you did, you know?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We had to put together the communication piece that embraced his plan, and tell it to our different constituents.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The politicians, we had to really make them understand what it was he was

charged with doing, because people thought he was doing this stuff out of just meanness.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Like, when he first got here, the trees were painted with Greek letters, and the benches and the grass had all these spray painted things on it, and the state said, "No, you're killing our trees. Those are not your trees. They belong to the State of Texas."

Erica Taylor: Interesting. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he had to get the campus aesthetically suitable for corporate, for the politicians, for the legislators, who frequent our campus.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Sometimes unannounced. And so we angered we some of the Greek alumni. Here again --

Erica Taylor: How did you deal with that?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We had to, I had to hold a lot of town hall meetings.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because they were like, "Where are our trees?" And they thought everybody was upset with him, but everybody, a lot of us knew, that was just that piece, that's why we said, we live and learn. Because that was that piece that we failed to communicate with, and those were the out of state alumni, because once they came back to campus they were like, "Where are our trees?"

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we had to do a piece on the beautification, so rather than just address what happened to the Greek trees, we did a piece on the total campus beautification.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Where was that piece? Was that like a campus publication?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, that was a campus -- and I will find that one for you because we speak to it, and it may be in this that we talked about. We talked about the campus beautification piece. And so they calmed down once they saw the end product.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When you came to Texas Southern before, everything was concrete, and Dr. Rutley said it looked like a prison.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He said, "It reminded me of a prison yard!" And so he dug up the concrete

and put greenery and shrubs and benches, lights, and flagpoles, and it's really, really pretty. Now they come back and they say they like it.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So it was an ongoing process.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But we had to communicate that piece, that it was a part of the campus beautification project. And actually show pictures, and they finally calmed down.

Erica Taylor: Now what about -- I think you talked about the political backlash. What kind of response did you get from the media alumni, other community members, and how did you deal with those things in the wake of the scandal situation?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The scandal situation? You know, when we got here, they had done every kind of story they could possibly do on the scandal, and so we had a media day, and Dr. Rutley laid out his agenda. He told them what he found.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He told them how he proposed to correct it and his vision. And so a lot of the media and the politicians were interested in the vision part because it really made sense about cleaning up the admission standards, and about how we were going to now move forward with reporting our finances. How we're going to have a transparent operation, and so far, so good.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because he had to stick to what he told them he was going to do. He had to be completely honest and open about that. And a lot of people -- 'cause even me, I left in 2000, here I'm back in 2008, and I had no idea it had deteriorated so.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It had deteriorated.

Erica Taylor: It doesn't take long.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, nobody wanted to be accountable, and I think that was a large part of what was happening. Nobody was checking. And now he checks.

Erica Taylor: Right. It's a difference.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: When you say you're going to recruit 1500 freshmen for me, I want to see the plan to do that, then I want to know if you met your mark. So nobody was doing that before, so that's why initially they think you're a bad person --

Erica Taylor: Just being tough.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. But we communicated. If you tell us you're going to do it; here is the plan; we put it in a press release.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Good, good.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, so we write up everything.

Erica Taylor: Okay, okay. So moving forward since you've come back, do you all have -- it's a two-fold question --

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay.

Erica Taylor: Do you all have any type of crisis communication plan or I mean I know that you talked about the things you do on a regular basis, but I wanted to ask specifically about that, and also I do want to ask about some of the things that you do on a regular basis. I know that you do the press releases. Do you have any regular publications, things like that?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Let me talk about the crisis communication plan.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have what we call a crisis information management team.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And we meet on a monthly --

Erica Taylor: And that's university-wide different ?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: University-wide, and it includes students, community, people, administrators, and the Police Department. We do have a document, it's probably something like 60 something pages, but I can e-mail it to you. And there's a specific piece on what everybody is supposed to do, from the Police Department, my area, the president, the spokesperson, and the students. And so we do have a Critical Incident Management Team, I think is what they call it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I will send that piece to you. And then the two-fold question, what was the other part?

Erica Taylor: What were some of the regular things -- I am just making sure that I get all of the information I need. I know it's kind of, you know.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, but I talked about it in the retreat, that we're more than press releases.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because what we try to do is place TSU faculty, and even some staff, because some staff do some things other than their 8:00 to 5:00.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They may be on partnership boards. They may be on energy boards, and so we utilize those individuals, especially for high profile holidays. Black History Month. Our calendar is just full, because people are always calling looking for speakers. "Hey, here is an opportunity to for you to go and talk about being the NASA center for urban planning."

Erica Taylor: So you've established yourself as a resource for speakers and experts.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Definitely.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have a speaker's bureau. *(can't understand her)* I will get you that as well. They can go and they can choose what type of speakers they want, and I told you that. That would be the same thing that would serve as a speaker, even our political analyst and those kind of things.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We also do what we call, "taking our show on the road." Like just today, they were opening a super-Social Security office. Well, we had our choir to perform, and so we do a lot of things in the community that gives us visibility. I go to a lot of breakfasts. There is a breakfast coming up where a politician talks about the state of the economy, or the state of education, and it's 800 people at that breakfast. And we take our little documents, they give us a table, and they acknowledge that we're there.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we do a lot of that with the churches, the community groups, the non-profits, so we start -- 'cause I feel my office is responsible for three major things, and maybe some other things: to heighten the awareness of the university by branding. We help with recruiting, because the more they see us, the visibility we get, people ask questions about our programs; and then to help increase fundraising from grants, alumni, and corporate.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so we're forever mindful that we just, we can't just do press releases.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We do a lot of editorials. We "own" the weekly papers, pretty much.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And it doesn't cost a lot to own them because they are looking for writers.

Erica Taylor: Right. They're understaffed, so they need the content.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. They are understaffed. Yeah. And we're now providing for our new cable channel, and we serve on the board of the radio station, and every week we provide them

with a 30 minute that you didn't know kind of thing. And so a lot, a lot of interaction, a lot of we're engaged with the colleges and schools which has worked to our benefit, because they feel very comfortable.

We do do an online weekly publication called *eNews*. And so it comes out every Monday, starts the week with all this good stuff. We're responsible for all campus communication. So everything has to come through us for approval. Events, statements, everything comes through us, so we're glad they have centralized that. When I first got back here, anybody who wanted to send something did, whether it was related to TSU or not.

Erica Taylor: Uh-oh.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we did a lot of publicity for people who were not even associated, but they wanted an African American audience.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we had to cut that out so now everything clears our office.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. And I think that answers that question. The last area of questioning that I have, and then again, I really want you to add if you have anything else.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay, okay.

Erica Taylor: Can you tell me about who else works in your office?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Ah, yeah!

Erica Taylor: What is the structure of your office, what do they do? You know, what kind of training do they have, if any, and what's the hierarchy in the university?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Okay.

Erica Taylor: Like who do you report to, what's the structure? I know some universities have the -- what is it -- university advancement? Some don't, so what is your structure?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Our structure we've got the president. Well, there is a Board of Regents. Nine members.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They are all appointed by the governor of the state. And then they hire the president. Then the president has five vice presidents. Vice President for Academic Affairs. Well, first he has an executive assistant president -- who used to be a president, but he is an executive vice president. Then there is a Vice President and Provost. Then there is a Vice President of Institutional Advancement.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Who else do we have? Oh a Vice President of Facilities.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That's Gloria Walker. Then a Vice President of Finance. So in the past we have had as many as eight or nine. He's streamlined that area. Then I report to the Vice president of Institutional Advancement, but I have direct access to the president.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Got it. Okay. Then your office?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And then my office. I have a senior writer editor. Angela Anderson, you can meet her if you want to. Angela Anderson, and she is responsible for the first level of press releases. I will handle the national press and spokesperson for the university on major issues.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: She handles a lot of the college and school initiatives, events, and so she will take the first stab at writing the press release. I sign off on everything. Nothing goes out unless I see it because I know the sensitivity and I know the politics. A lot of people try to pull a lot of things over our eyes, so we have got to be mindful, because you automatically get a 20,000 e-mail blast to alumni and former students.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You get access to 10,000 students and 1500 employees. So a lot of people try to sneak stuff through for that audience.

Erica Taylor: Just to get the audience.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The Houston Rockets, The Astros, they try to partner with us to try to get to that audience. And so we had to pull the plug on that, because what are we getting?

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And when I was at the non-profit that's what taught me, because they had to give the non-profit a day at Rockets game. They had to give them paraphernalia that they could use later if they wanted autographed by all of the players,

Erica Taylor: Wow, interesting.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And they had to give them PA announcements throughout the whole game. I mean, they've got to pay for using you.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And then at halftime they honored them. And so when I came back here and I saw them sending out all of these announcements for the Rockets, and the Texans, and I'm like -- No! They pay for that!

Erica Taylor: Right!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That's a built-in African American audience!

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right! And so a lot of them, Proctor and Gamble, the cell phone people, they try to get to you for free.

Erica Taylor: Interesting!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So that's why the tightness of the . . . I told the president no, no, no, no, no! They pay for that. And so he made it all communication come. (?)

So then I've got Andrew McCray who is another junior writer, but graphic designer, because we found that marketing was always tied up, so we had to find somebody with the skills to get the quick stuff out. The fliers, the invitations, the . . . Because a lot of that falls on us to communicate, and I didn't have the time to do it, so I opted for, instead of another reporter, I opted for a writer and an art director, that's what I call him.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And then I have got a secretary.

Erica Taylor: Great!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Who tries to maintain my schedule, but no, none of that.

Erica Taylor: I can only imagine.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: None of that. She also serves as a what we "Tiger Talk coordinator." A lot of times we get calls from parents or alumni, and they just want the answer to some question, so she is responsible for making sure their calls are answered, that their questions are answered.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right now it's pretty quiet, but normally from 7:00 o'clock, and I get here at 6:30, 7:00 o'clock, because I want to already have my day started.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because you never know --

Erica Taylor: Before the phone starts ringing.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah. I'm here until about 4:00 or 5:00, but always accessible. What the university was doing initially, I had two phones. They decided rather than have me use two phones, that they would just give me a stipend.

Erica Taylor: Okay, that works. That works. Yeah, the job that I had that I was on call, I

had two, and that was the other thing.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, you can't keep up with one, how you going to keep up with two?

Erica Taylor: Yeah, exactly. And don't let you try to have a cute, little clutch purse; you've got two phones.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. So I really believe the president has made an investment in this area.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: The other day he said that he wants me to spearhead a grassroots campaign because we have spent time getting all of these situations under control, and he feels that the local community really does not know him.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so now we're going to come back, and we're going to introduce him. And he said he didn't, with all the problems, he didn't want to talk to them. He said now that he has the finances straight, now that he has good data from increasing the enrollment standards, he said now he feels comfortable going to the black churches, the community breakfasts; he has an advisory committee. We write his bullet points for him because we want to him stay on task because sometimes he can say some stuff.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So we give him his talking points.

Erica Taylor: Good, good. All right, I guess there is one last question, just because you've sparked my thought process.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: No, you just go.

Erica Taylor: Do you do a lot of writing for the president, or is he a president that likes to write things on his own? I know that sometimes that is an individual task.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I do the first draft, especially if it's something that I've scheduled him for.

Erica Taylor: Okay, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: There's some key points that I want him to make, and so I do a lot of his writing.

Erica Taylor: Okay. All right. Well, I think you've answered all of my questions. If there is anything that you'd like to add, feel free.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I want to add that I really believe that it's only a matter of time before Texas Southern University becomes *the* premier HBCU in the country. And I say that with all

sincerity. I'm a product of Southern University.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I see where they are losing students; we're gaining a better student. And I think if we follow Dr. Rutley's plan that we will become not only a premier HBCU university, but we're going to be a force to be reckoned with.

Erica Taylor: Okay, okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: We have got some really exciting programs. Things that people didn't know were going on here. And we're going to make sure now that they know that they are here. So once we got out of this kind of shaky, rocky start, I think now we can put more attention into strategizing and targeting our audiences better.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, we were running the first two years. Running and gunning. But now I've got my -- I took my staff on retreat, and we're going to be -- we're going to do some very purposeful positioning for the university. And we're starting with publications like *New York Times, Black Enterprise, Ebony,* because we think that if we go after a more serious student and a more serious parent that is what we will get.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Sounds like a good strategy to me.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, yeah.

Erica Taylor: Well, thank you so much for your time.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: You're welcome.

Erica Taylor: That was a wealth of information.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Yeah, you've got a bunch. I'm doing some consulting. I've got a number of schools here who tapped me to come in and do media training.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And they love the role playing part.

Erica Taylor: Oh, that's always fun.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: They love that role playing part, so I may decide to do that after I retire, but I love being a business woman.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Great, great. Well, thank you again. I really appreciate it.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: With the University of Houston, would his president be on the field accepting a check for $50,000? I said Texas Southern has its own uniqueness.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: He turned around and he looked at me. And now he is telling me that Texas Southern has its own uniqueness! I'm like, I know!

Erica Taylor: Well, you know...

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so he does, he tells her, he says that.

Erica Taylor: You have to embrace, you know, when in Rome.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so he is very comfortable now. It was almost like when he would see me coming it was like . . . But I'm here to help you. So he now he knows that.

Erica Taylor: Well, that's because you weren't afraid to tell him, you know, about the environment, and what was different, and you know, what he should, you know, really consider.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And a lot of it was like, you've got to be kidding! They would do that! They were shocked to learn that a lot of the negativity that TSU was facing came from the faculty. They found that hard to believe.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And I had the media to tell them that for every positive story that I sent, the faculty were telling them five negative. And a lot of times they would find that they were untruths. Like one time a faculty member called *The Chronicle* and told *The Chronicle* that when the hurricane hit, we didn't have any -- that our buildings were not insured. We're state facilities -- we have got to be insured!

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so, they were like okay, we thought, no story, bye! Then we had five students who had gone to Channel 13, and told them that TSU was evicting them from their apartments, and if we had not had the relationship, it was about to hit the air, and the girl called me, and she said, "I just want to check on something."

And I told her, "That is not true." I said, "Every end of the year, they get a non-renewal letter if they do not pay off their balances." I said, "And it gives them until December 31st to make arrangements to pay off their balances, and a lot of times, they have just got to sign their deferment letter saying that financial aid is coming."

And she said, "Aww, get out of here. Okay." You know.

Erica Taylor: See?

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: But the past, and what you will find, is that that's an old student who had been here before, and they are probably seniors, and they don't realize that it's a new day, and that the media is going to pick up the phone and call and check this stuff. Because prior to me returning, oh, the media was just having a field day!

Erica Taylor: I bet, with no staff . . .

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: That's just like what I was dealing with today. I was dealing with today -- walked in, and somebody had called and told the media that we had misappropriated monies for the Barbara Jordan / Mickey Leland papers, because we're supposed to be digitizing the papers.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And what happened was the director of the Mickey Leland Center wrote the grant, and he thought he was going to get the full $300,000 for the Mickey Leland paper since he wrote the grant. Well, the Federal Government decided that they were going to split the money: half the money for Barbara Jordan, half the money for Mickey Leland. And so he's going now I can't hire the full-time archivist I wanted because the grant is for three years.

You know how they give us the little bitty grants, and they want you to stretch it out.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he said, "Well, that would be like hiring an archivist for $50,000; I've got to pay 26% fringe benefits," he said, "and I've got to hire somebody to scan." He said. "So it wasn't enough money."

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So he was trying to write some more proposals to get some more money, and in the mean time, he asked the funders could he hire a consultant instead, that way he wouldn't have to pay the 26% fringe benefits. And so it took him a while to get started.

So we let this white boy who was out there saying that he misappropriated the monies, so why wasn't the papers digitized yet. And so I had to work to diffuse that, but you might hear some of that on the news tonight.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: So that's what we were -- so I had to draft a statement explaining that the money had to be shared by both. The Barbara Jordan papers are done. Mickey Leland is a little bit more challenging, because when the storm came in, we had to take them completely off the campus, because they were in a basement of the library. So they just came back to the campus this year.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Because some of them were wet, and had to be dried out, and no, we couldn't let you see those papers, or use those papers because they are damaged.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: And so I had to draft a statement this morning to give to the media about

that.

Erica Taylor: Just think... It's a never ending job.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: It's never ending. And I said as long as we're honest, and that's why I went and I sat down with the guy, and I said, "Tell me what's going on."

"You want the long story or the short version?"

And I said, "I want the truth."

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: "All of it." And so he gave it to me, so the media were like, "Well, I'm glad we had a chance to talk about this." But come to find out, and a lot of times what you will find out is somebody has an agenda. The guy who called the media wants to be the Director of the Leland Center.

Erica Taylor: Got ya!

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: Right. So it's never ending, and you're right. You need somebody who knows the lay of the land --

Erica Taylor: That's true.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: -- because otherwise, mmm-hmm...

Erica Taylor: You would spend a lot of time learning all the background, you know, versus you already know all of that stuff, so you can just hit the ground running, as they say.

Ms. Eva K. Pickens: I don't know if Wendy is still down here, but I told her that...

(audio ended abruptly)

Erica Taylor: Okay, well are you going to be there for a second, because my stuff is still in your office. (extraneous noise) This pretty much picks up everything.

So Ms. Pickens was telling me how you came here. When did you come here?

Ms. Wendy Adair: Okay.

Erica Taylor: Tell me a little bit about yourself and your background briefly, if you don't mind.

Ms. Wendy Adair: All right, I will be glad to do that. I was the Associate Vice President for University Relations. So that's marketing and public relations over at the University of Houston. I had started in media relations, I guess as the Assistant Director. And then about the time when I was ready to move on, and usually you have to move out to move on, a position would open up, so I got to move up. So I was there for 30 years.

Erica Taylor: Okay, wow.

Ms. Wendy Adair: I was getting bored. There is no other nice way to say it. I'd been doing it a long time, you know, I could -- that was kind of the . . .

Erica Taylor: Do it in your sleep?

Ms. Wendy Adair: Yeah. I got to write the 75th Anniversary history, so I've got a book published because of it, so that was totally cool, and so then it was kind of like, okay, I've got to think of something else to do. President Rudley had been the CFO, Chief Financial Officer, at University of Houston and the U. of H. system. And then had spent about 10 months, I guess, as the interim president, interim chancellor and president. And so he was recruited to come be the president at Texas Southern.

And this would have been in January of 2008.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: No, January 2007, and he had accepted the position, and in Texas, you have a 21 day waiting period, if you will, between when they announce the finalists or finalist, and when the board can actually hire them, so that if there is any public conversation that needs to go on or protest or whatever, it makes it available.

That allows, they put that into play so that universities could do presidential searches without having to release through open records all of the candidates while the search was going on.

Erica Taylor: Okay, okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Which puts a damper on getting somebody good.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So that's how they ended up doing it, so most universities identify the single finalist, announce that person, and then 21 days later, the board votes, and that person gets it. So we were still in that kind of hiatus point, and the woman who is now his Chief of Staff had been working for him before, and was volunteering to help during the transition, and so she called and she said he was interested in visiting with me about Texas Southern, and I went, "ehhh" -- I knew about all of the trauma and turmoil and horror stories about it, and thought, "Well, I will be glad to give him a list of things he needs to think about when he's looking for his PR assignment."

And so I came over and visited with him. I got, like, totally turned on to the whole idea of what he wanted to do here, and so I said, "I am not giving you my list of things you ought to do."

And he said, "Go think about the for a while."

So I drove home, and got halfway home, and called him on the phone, and said, "I'm not thinking about it anymore. I want to come." And it was, there was a little more machination back and forth about it all, but bottom line was I got really excited about what he wanted to do here.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And I was excited also about getting to be a vice president. It was interesting, because he originally talked to me about just doing the marketing and public relations side, and then when we got to finalizing it and all, and I'm back talking to Janice again, she says, "Oh no, he wants you to do the whole thing. Take on development, and do all of this other stuff."

So that's been a totally fun, new thing, but I knew coming over here, that there was no one here. That's not quite true. I mean, we had four people, I guess, working in all of advancement. In 2006, they had budget cut-backs, and they fired, they riffed, laid off, whatever everybody in PR and everybody in fundraising.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Wendy Adair: They were in the middle of a big crisis. I guess, they figured they weren't going to raise any money anyway, and why they would fire all the PR people in the middle of the one of the biggest firestorms you'd ever have, I don't know.

Erica Taylor: That is quite interesting.

Ms. Wendy Adair: But it turned out to be a great benefit to me 'cause I had to do a whole bunch when I got on board, but I didn't have to worry about doing a lot of evaluations of existing people, and figuring out where they would fit, or if they wouldn't, and if they wouldn't, how do I get them moved to someplace else so that I could get people that could.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: I had an open slate.

Erica Taylor: That's a good thing.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So I had worked with the #2 person in marketing at University of Houston who has a very strong background in market research, and had been doing the publications and everything for me, for us over there. I asked him if he would come over and join us. I got to revamp the whole office and how we were going to be structured. And they had had two vice presidents, so we merged that into basically me, and I turned the two vice presidential positions into director positions, and also then created the marketing director. So I took those two jobs and salaries, and got like three people out of it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So Earlie Hudnall was working here. We had an artist in the marketing department, a researcher in the marketing department, Shanettra *(¿ Spelling ?),* my budget officer and admin. Who else would have been here? I guess Lachanda *(¿ Spelling ?)* was here then, but she was doing the marketing, so when we revamped everything, she was interested in doing the special events. So she kind of made that move. But that was it. Everybody else I got to hire new!

Erica Taylor: Wow. Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So I'm -- and we're still kind of trying to get out of the firestorm, so the first person I needed to hire was somebody to do communications.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And Hudnall, Earlie Hudnall, who had been the photographer here for, I don't know, how long has he worked here?

Ms. Eva Pickens: Oh my God, 30 years, I'm sure.

Ms. Wendy Adair: At least, yeah. He said, "You know, Eva might be interested in talking to you," and I went, "No, you're kidding."

I said, "Eva Pickens is the only public relations person that I know that I affiliate with Texas Southern University period." It's the only person whose name, other than Chuck Smith, who Eva worked with, but Eva was the last PR person here, that was doing anything out that you could tell.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So I said, "She'd be perfect!" So I called her up, and we talked, and she agreed to come join us, and she is the only person I've ever hired who had a room full of flowers from ***the staff*** at the university in her office the day she started work!

Erica Taylor: Wow! You didn't tell me that part!

Ms. Eva Pickens: (...Cannot understand her...) ... Going to.

Ms. Wendy Adair: It was pretty awesome! She had faculty who had worked with her before, deans who had worked with her before -- everybody was so excited she was coming back. So from my perspective, it was fabulous because she already knew the place. She clearly already knew the media. She's one of the best media negotiators I've ever worked with. She doesn't cow-tow to them. She just tells them truth, and then expects them to do honest and valuable things with it. And she's fearless, and also seems to be tireless. So maybe you should leave! So she's doing this absolutely fantastic job, and we hit it running, so Greg and I and one other person who no longer is working in recruitment, the three of us sat down and brainstormed the TSU Now idea out of kind of nothing in a few minutes, because we needed to get something out there quick.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: We did a fast internal design billboards and bought billboards and had stuff up in, I don't know, by the end of March, which was within like three weeks of my getting here.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Wendy Adair: It was just so bad, things were still so bad out there, and the institution wasn't getting any credit, and the president -- I mean one of the reasons that I came was because the president said, "I want this to be about the school." And everything that has been talked about with the university for a very long time, has dealt with the upper echelons and the administration, and all of whatever good, bad, and indifferent was going on at that level, and nobody's been talking about the programs, and what the faculty are doing, and what the students are doing, and that's what I wanted to focus on.

Erica Taylor: Right, okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So it was really easy to build up. Very straightforward. I don't need any clever slogans. I want -- we spent the first year being very, very careful that what we said was truth.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So, you know, so from a concept idea, it was very easy. I didn't want us to put slogans together; I didn't want us to have hyperbole. I had some folks that had done a pitch on -- and in fact that were about to launch a campaign before I got here, and I don't even know what it was about, but it had, you know, some sort of clever yadi-yada, and it was like, "no." All the people out there want to know is that they can trust us again. And the only way you can do that is by putting stuff out that is verifiable. That people can go and say, "Do you really have this? Yes, you do; okay, I believe you."

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And no, we're not putting the president on the billboard, and he would have killed us if we had. Although he did help design the first billboard. So that's kind of the direction we were going, and Eva was perfect for it, because she speaks truth.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: She doesn't color it up, you know.

Erica Taylor: I can tell.

Ms. Wendy Adair: I just need her to be four or five more people, but other than that . . . So what else she was referring to is that we, I told her -- one of the things that I've always known is that people, they congratulate you for the good, big stories that you get in, and then they wrap the fish in it, and they say, "Okay, what have you done for me lately?" kind of thing.

But nobody ever credits you for the stuff that you keep from getting in the paper, that you diffuse.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: I mean, if you are doing it well, nobody notices it, in truth. But that has more impact on the institution, particularly when it's coming out of a crisis, than getting a good news story in because a bad news story carries, I don't know, 10, 20, 50 times more weight than a good news story does.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So I said every time you diffuse a story and you flip it to good, or you keep it out all together, I will buy you lunch. And I've been buying her lunch, pretty much, ever since.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And she just did one today, where they came in going, "You're doing yada-yada," and -- not even a student -- somebody that's a rabble-rouser that likes to raise heck had come in and said that somebody's doing something wrong. And she found out the truth, and she wrote up something very simple for people to understand, and she gave it out, and now they are going to do a story about what we're trying to do. So that's a powerful --

Erica Taylor: So you get another lunch!

Ms. Wendy Adair: Yes, I already sent her the note saying, "I owe you a lunch." It's a powerful thing to be able to do.

Erica Taylor: Sounds like it.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And in crisis communication it's a big deal! So that's kind of how we got here. We have been doing this for two and a half years. I came in March of '07, so for about a month after Dr. Rudley.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: He hit the ground running. The first day he fired the provost and the athletics director.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Or was it the coach? Anyway, it was somebody. Yeah, it was the AD. Changed by two months in, he had changed, or put in place, admissions requirements. He had a mandate from the governor, and from the Board of Regents, and from the community, and the university to make change happen fast, and turn this around, and stop the bleeding, and stop everybody thinking that the place was going to go away.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: So we got to do it; it was great fun.

Erica Taylor: Excellent.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And so now, three years in, we're at a point where the financial stuff and the administrative stuff is starting to come together, and it's starting to work, and things are being recognized on it. And so the provost and the academic side of the house is now looking at what do we need to do to make sure that our academic product is as strong as it can be.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: We have new deans coming in, and we have got a lot of new initiatives going on.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Excellent. And one other question, and then if you want to add anything -- can you just explain who, which offices filter into you?

Ms. Wendy Adair: Yeah, this is university --

Erica Taylor: I know you have communications, and then --

Ms. Wendy Adair: University Advancement is communications and community relations, 'cause Eva wears that hat, and sadly, not for the -- we need it, but I'm losing on the communications side for the community relations. 'Cause of course, we don't have more bodies doing it; we just have more responsibilities. Marketing which includes our student recruitment marketing as well as branding, and most of our funding and concentration on the marketing side has been toward students, 'cause once we put in admissions requirements, now we're competing for students with LSU, with everybody.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Special events, which deals with the major university events and the presidential events, alumni relations, and fundraising.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And so, and I've got about 23 people all together doing all of that, which is fewer people that I had just doing public relations over at UH.

Erica Taylor: Wow, interesting.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And despite all of that --

Erica Taylor: Well, I always like to ask about the structure, because every university is very different.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Is a little bit different, yeah. Eva and her team are still getting more hits in the paper than my old crew across the street even though they've got 10 times more people.

Erica Taylor: Wow. That says something.

Ms. Wendy Adair: They do a lot of work, and they get a lot out, and we still bug her to get more. Yeah. Well, what she hasn't been able to concentrate as much on, because it takes longer to do, are the feature stories, or the faculty research stories, or the things that are going on in the heart of the university. She turns an awful lot of stuff on the happenings going on here. And when big awards come out, and the president's -- or we got visitors coming in or whatever -- but we're still trying to reach out and get some grad students or something in that can work with us in turning out more of those features that we can use.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And she's just put somebody in place to do social media, and so we have got somebody that is going to work halftime for us to be tweeting and blogging, and whatever new name that they come up with next week that people will pay attention to.

Erica Taylor: It will be tomorrow, not even next week.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Yeah, you're right. I'm sure blogging, now that I know what blogging is, it is very *passe',* I'm sure.

Erica Taylor: You know, Twitter is considered micro-blogging.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Twitter is micro-blogging. I actually know what Twitter is, and I'm very proud that I do, but I don't know how to do it.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And I can text message and that is as close as I can get. But, I mean, one of the things that we're charged with, and she leads, is how do we reach students?

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: They don't read e-mail anymore, so all of that -- once we have figured out how to do that, so much good that did me! And it's more and more critical because of all the events that have happened on campuses across the country, where students have been endangered if they didn't get information about what to do very quickly in their hands, and so, we're looking at much more texting; they are going to be putting kind of announcement boards in every classroom that will run emergency media. We partnered up with somebody whose created

like a pager system that's only for emergency notification that people can hang on their belt loop or keys or whatever.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And so we will see how, whether that gets widely distributed. There is an expense to it, so I am not sure how many people are going to buy into that. But that's a real issue, so on the crisis communication stuff, just as much as somebody calling up and saying something bad is going on.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: It's, you know, we have been -- LSU is kind of familiar with this too -- with all the weather emergencies that we have, we have a lot of times when --

Erica Taylor: Well, I'm looking at for my project, I have three different HBCUs, and three different crises, so I'm looking at Xavier --

Ms. Wendy Adair: Of course!

Erica Taylor: -- for Hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Exactly. And Xavier actually moved --

Erica Taylor: I looked at Dillard, but they didn't want to talk to me, so . . .

Ms. Wendy Adair: They're uh -- we've got -- we stole one of their deans, so I could have done it from here. But Xavier ended up coming to Houston, and had their administration housed over at University of Houston for about a semester.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Ms. Wendy Adair: And ran their law school out of U. of H. for that time. So yeah, there was a lot of partnerships going on. But we did, you know, our big crisis in the first year that we were here, that first fall, was Hurricane Ike, and it shut the school down, and not only did we try to just do our recovery stuff from it, but we also became a community distribution point --

Erica Taylor: Right.

Ms. Wendy Adair: -- for water and food, and so Eva and the president, and Joel Osteen and everybody was out here passing food out, and water out to people. So managing that piece of it as well as the Wayne Dultrapheno's of the world when they come on board.

Erica Taylor: All right, well, I don't want to take up any more -- I know you have somewhere to go.

Ms. Wendy Adair: Yeah, I need to head over there soon.

Erica Taylor: But thank you very much; I appreciate all of that.

Ms. Eva Pickens: You are very welcome; we wish you . . .

(audio ended abruptly)

Erica Taylor
Interview with Mr. Richard Tucker
Director of Publications
Xavier University of Louisiana

Erica Taylor: All right, well Mr. Bell was telling me that you were instrumental in helping him, the rest of the staff, and the university as a whole, get through the Katrina situation.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Possibly.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: If he says so.

Erica Taylor: He does say so. My first line of questioning is more about your own background, and then we will get to the actual crisis, so tell me -- you told me you went to LSU.

Mr. Richard Tucker: I was born in a log cabin.

Erica Taylor: Maybe not that far! Any education you have, any professional experience, how you got into this industry, how you came to Xavier.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Okay. I went to LSU in Baton Rouge, and graduated in journalism. I think I selected journalism because people told me I could write.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Looking back, I should have followed the advise of my journalism professor, Mr. Featherston, who said, "If you can do anything, plumbing, electricity, go do it, 'cause you aint gonna make no money in journalism!" I think he's right. But anyway, I graduated from there, then I went to work at the East Bank Newspaper doing sports. Sports editor for that, it's a little area newspaper in Metarie, which is a suburb of New Orleans here. Then I started doing some news stuff to that. And then I got that the job at Xavier primarily as the sports information director and the news director, and I've been here since 1979.

Erica Taylor: Wow, okay. So now what is your role?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, they call me Director of Publications. So right now I do the hard copy stuff I do, printed stuff is, alumni magazine *Xavier Gold*, and I do "Eye on Xavier" which is a quarterly newsletter that goes to, sometimes it goes to the alumni (?), but mostly right now it's going to perspective students, and stuff like that.

I also do all of the stuff online for university relations and developing people over here, and I do a monthly online newsletter called "T-Max" which is just a month at Xavier. And I also have (...Cannot understand him...) also is a printed piece that we do that we send to people that have applied.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And that's ... and I do postal stuff, the postal mailing, bulk mailing and stuff like that. That's the kind of stuff I do. And I help out with news. We all work together on all this kind of stuff, and if there is any special thing, like we just had a big concert, scholarship concert, so I had to do the program for that.

Erica Taylor: Okay, great. So since you are the Director of Publications, and I'm just getting background about the office, and information like that, and that way I don't duplicate when I talk to Mr. Bell. Was that all of the -- how many publications and how often do you do them? You don't have to repeat what you said, but just overall, how many publications?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, we have *Xavier Gold* which is supposed to come out twice a year, but it really only comes out once a year. We are actually going to do an annual report this year which I'm working on now, so that's another thing only once. "T-Max" is online and we do that 12 times a year. "Eye on Xavier" is a printed piece, and that comes out three times a year. "It Happens at Xavier" is sort of a hard copy of the "T-Max" although it's not exactly the same thing, and that comes out every month as well.

Erica Taylor: Okay. And who writes for these publications? Are you the sole writer, or do you have students or other staff members?

Mr. Richard Tucker: It's me, it's me. Occasionally, you know, another member of the staff will write something and I will use it, but mostly it's me.

Erica Taylor: Okay. And who does the design?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Mostly it's still me *(?? Audio unclear).*

Erica Taylor: Okay. Very talented.

Mr. Richard Tucker: On a piece like *Xavier Gold* and "Eye on Xavier" --

Erica Taylor: Is that what I have here?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yes. What I will do, I will do -- I am not at the point where I can do stuff -- I don't have the software to do it -- but I do a mock-up and I send it to another guy, and whoever gets the job, they make it look good.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay. I think that covers your background and what you do on a daily basis; now let's jump to Hurricane Katrina. In your own words, obviously it's a well-known situation. You don't have to give me every single detail, but in your words, what happened in terms of how it affected the campus of Xavier.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, the thing I remember most about Katrina is on Friday afternoon, I left here about 5 o'clock, and the storm was going to Florida. I walked in my door, and my wife says, did you see the new track? And that was all downhill from that point. I don't know if you have ever followed hurricanes, but whenever you watch the weather, and they --

Erica Taylor: Not since I moved here. But Gustav hit Baton Rouge pretty badly.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, well, I was in Baton Rouge for that too! So, yeah, you watch the tracks, sometimes they right and sometimes they wrong, and you get in the cone of death, and they say, "It's gonna come in here," and when I got home, they had changed it.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So we had sent out e-mails and stuff to the campus telling to watch the news, and that if campus would be closed we would send out, we had this emergency E2 Campus thing that people had signed up for. We could send, Mr. Bell could send a thing telling about the thing, and to watch the web site. We have an emergency web site that kicks in when they have to get out of town. We had all of that set up, and over the weekend we told people that we are going to be closed. Still hoping -- they usually always turn to the right just before they get to us. Katrina waited a little too long to go to the right. And it did go to the right, but it knocked us out.

Erica Taylor: Wow. Okay. And then in terms of the damage, the flooding, the extended closure, describe that in your own words.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, I wasn't here, so I could take that with a grain of salt. They did have some students who stayed, and they had some administrators who stayed with the students. And they kept them in dorms. And from what I understand, the storm came through, and everybody looked around, and said, "Looking good. We are okay." And then the levees broke. And then the water, and they started watching the water go up and up and up and up and up! So they had to hustle the kids somewhere, and all the power was out, and everything like that, so they had to get food from the cafeteria and bring it over to the nuns who had a gas stove who could cook it, and then had to use a boat to get to the kids. And it took them a couple of days to get some buses here. I can't explain all of that, but we got some buses that came and got the kids and took them out.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: As far as the campus goes, there was like six feet of water in every fricking building here. I don't know if you have seen some of the pictures that were online --

Erica Taylor: I have.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So that's just after it was over. So we were knocked out.

Erica Taylor: If my information is correct, y'all were closed that fall semester, correct?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yes. When it happened, we had been to school like a week, I think.

Erica Taylor: Wow, I understand.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So what you do is, we thought if we opened to the kids that

were here, and committed to Xavier would come back. The freshmen class you didn't know about because they had only been here a week; they had no --

Erica Taylor: No attachment.

Mr. Richard Tucker: No real attachment to the place.

Erica Taylor: Right. I know -- was I working at Hampton -- I'm not sure, but I know Hampton accepted a few.

Mr. Richard Tucker: A lot of people...

Erica Taylor: They went all around the country. Let's see. After the aftermath, after the decision was made to keep it closed that semester, and considering what you just said, worrying about if the freshmen class would return, what did you all do from that point, communications-wise?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Most of the stuff we did was by *(...Audio unclear...)*

Erica Taylor: Was by what? I'm sorry.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Internet, or sending out a message with this E2 campus thing.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: That was really our only avenue. Everything was out. As a matter of fact, cell phones didn't work for like a week. You found out that you could send text messages because apparently that's sent a different way.

Erica Taylor: Yeah, I learned that during Gustav.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, but I mean, as far as you know, calling people and stuff like that. I personally went to Mississippi, and then after the storm went right over us. We came back to Baton Rouge where my son lived, which turned out to be a good move because that's where Xavier set up all of their temporary offices and stuff like that. So we had to, they had set up, the guy who was the web master had made arrangements with Xavier University of Ohio to host our stuff.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Are you all partnered, partners or ...

Mr. Richard Tucker: No...

Erica Taylor: Only in special situations?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, I don't know exactly how that thought came about, but I know that now we have a back-up, a much better back-up system than we had before.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So we were allowed to go, and so then they made arrangements to put us different offices and different places. Actually the president was in Grand Coteau which is by Lafayette, so people had to go there to meet with him, but most of the offices were in Baton Rouge. Our office was at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital. They gave us an empty room, and they gave us some tables, and they gave us some connections. Mr. Bell himself came here at some point, and got our computers and brought them there, so we had our hard drives and stuff.

Erica Taylor: Wow, okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And then we used that server to produce a newsletter, and I think it came out every week or so to try to update people, and the photographer would come down and take some pictures to show what was going on and to give updates as to what was happening. I think the decision was made almost immediately that we would come back in January for the exact reason I mentioned. If you sit out a whole year, the kids are not going to come back.

Erica Taylor: Right, okay. So did you have any special efforts to reach especially that freshman class, or any students that were feeling like that may not want to come back?

Mr. Richard Tucker: I'm sure the Dean of Students and stuff contacted those people -- the ones we had e-mail addresses on and stuff, and we sent out broadcast e-mails to those we had. But most people had been directed to check the web site, so that's where most of our information was posted, and that's where they got it.

Erica Taylor: Okay. So how long were you all set up in Baton Rouge?

Mr. Richard Tucker: We came back from Baton Rouge in January.

Erica Taylor: So the whole semester, you were pretty much set up there?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah. Some people came back, the people that worked had the campus up and going came back here, but we stayed in Baton Rouge. My wife was in Baton Rouge with me, and she came back in November.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Okay, because my house had a little water in it, but it wasn't flooded completely, so we were lucky in that respect. So she came here, and I stayed in Baton Rouge until January. In fact the last month, I gave the apartment there, and came back and *(...Audio fades...)*

Erica Taylor: Wow, I'm sure that got a little tired.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Fortunately I was going against traffic most of the time, most people were coming in when I was going out and vice versa, so it wasn't too bad.

Erica Taylor: So the drive every day -- it's not a bad drive every once in a while, but every day would be a little taxing.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah.

Erica Taylor: So you kept everybody updated via the web site for the most part, and broadcast e-mails throughout the fall semester of 2005. What did you do when it came time for the reopening? Was there anything ceremonial or any special information that people needed to know?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, you had to send them information on how to register. They had to do a register a, and all that regular stuff you have to do.

Erica Taylor: You've got to do it anyway, right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You can't just send out information and make that available for everybody to do that. Most of it was done via the Internet, because there was no place for them to go do it. So it was important to get information out to the kids on how to transfer the credits, because a lot of them were all over the place, you know.

Erica Taylor: Right, right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So, umm...

Erica Taylor: Did you all have to deal with parents at all? Questions and phone calls?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Oh yeah. I mean we were here two years, and people still thought we were under water!

Erica Taylor: Wow, interesting.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You know, because there are people that don't follow it. You know, if you are not from here, you don't know the situation. We had like, I have some relatives in Austin. Well, the thought the week was over -- y'all back? Uh, no! You know? Then they had a lot of misconceptions. We had a lot of damage -- you know, you watch the news media you think it was only the poor neighborhoods that flooded. But there was Metarie people with $3,000,000 houses, and they flooded too.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So there were a lot of misconceptions, and then people were worried about, and then of course, not only did we have Katrina, Rita came by close about a month later, and some people worried about that, and didn't know what the conditions of the city was.

And like, we came back, but a lot of surrounding area was not back, so you had to reassure them that they would be safe, and that there was access to the things that they would need, and things like that.

Erica Taylor: Okay. You said the decision was made right away to open in January.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yes.

Erica Taylor: Do you think that was based on, I guess, knowledge of what would be available, or was it more like wishful thinking, because like you said, you all had knowledge of the campus situation.

Mr. Richard Tucker: It was a combination of both. The president said, "We're going to come back," and everybody goes, "You sure about that?" And he was determined to do it, and Mr. Bracey, who is the utilities/facilities person, and fortunately we had a contact with this construction company, I don't know what they were called -- they contacted them right away, and they came on campus, and they got the power going up and stuff like that so they could do work, and they immediately started working on it, so it was a challenge in a lot of ways.

Erica Taylor: Okay, so in addition to the facilities, do you all, I don't know if you have knowledge of this or not, but like financially, how did the university recover?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, I am not sure if they want -- you might check with Mr. Bell if they actually want to say this, but I think they borrowed a lot. They borrowed from the endowment -- the endowment we had to keep things going. They borrowed some money from the endowment to keep things going, and then they were able to get some FEMA money to keep things going like that. That's probably, you know.

Erica Taylor: I think that --

Mr. Richard Tucker: That's another reason you want to get back going because if they not here, there's no money coming in.

Erica Taylor: No tuition money.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Right.

Erica Taylor: So, I think it's pretty widely accepted, in terms of crisis communication that Xavier handled the situation very well, and was very successful. Why do you think that is? What is your evaluation of what you all did in that time of crisis?

Female Speaker: I think we did a pretty good job.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Given, you know, the resources we had. I mean, we had nothing, everything was gone, even to the point where the program that I used to print the stuff, do the newsletter, is called Dream Weave, and it's gone, and I had to call the company and try to buy a copy of the software. You know, and not pay the usual price, you get the educational price. "Well, you have to prove that you're from a university. Can you send me something on your letterhead?" I said, "There is no letterhead. The letterhead is under six feet of water!"

Well, they are just like, this guy in Idaho or wherever the hell he is, just could not grasp the fact that I don't have anything. I am not there. I'm in Baton Rouge. They got in, and I can't get there because you can't get into the city.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And I have nothing. So finally, I finally remembered that I had an

ID card, and so I sent them that, and they finally accepted that. But that's the kind of stuff --

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Richard Tucker: -- that went on. So they entered a lot of stuff to find a place for us to stay, and to get Internet connections and stuff like that, and then set it up. It was really the only way she could communicate --

Erica Taylor: Do you all in terms of e-mail, I know that you have the broadcast e-mails, but in terms of your personal e-mail, did you have your Xavier e-mail address or did you have to use like a free account, or were those available?

Mr. Richard Tucker: No, I think that was like routed through.

Erica Taylor: Routed through.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So we were able to have that.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And I do recall that I know alumni at the office, which is Institution of *(can't understand)* which we're under, they sent out a couple of mailings, and I think it was mostly to alumni and stuff. So remember we had to figure out how to send mail, because our bulk account was in New Orleans. And we had to arrange for that. Actually, I think that they had mailed that stuff out of Lafayette.

Erica Taylor: Wow. Interesting. Okay, so in terms of the media, how do you feel about your interactions with the media during that time?

Mr. Richard Tucker: I think it was fairly good. Warren did most of that, contacting people and them contacting him, figuring out how to do. So Dana Bryant came down, and a bunch of people like that. So I never actually came down until, I think it was six weeks later -- I live in Metarie, in Jefferson Parish, and they said you could come in for a day to get your stuff, and get the hell out. Don't stay, because there's no power, there's nothing.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: As a matter of fact, the first thing we did when we got home was to take the food out of the refrigerator and bury it in the backyard, because they said do not put it out in the trash because there's no trash pick-up. Foods done rotten and stuff like that, so that was the first thing we did. We dug a hole in the backyard and put the food in it.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And it was hard to find a spot in the backyard because every tree I had was down.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Every tree. It was like a jungle.

Erica Taylor: I bet.

Mr. Richard Tucker: And that was six weeks later after they had actually cleaned off most of the streets.

Erica Taylor: Right. So, I guess --

Mr. Richard Tucker: So then Warren came back and got our computers and he came back on several occasions when the news media wanted to come and see the campus and stuff like that.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So he dealt with most of that.

Erica Taylor: Do you feel like, I guess, just looking, and I will talk to him about the actual dealings with the media, but just looking at the media coverage, the tone, all of that, do you feel like they were helpful or hindrances at that time -- just in your opinion.

Mr. Richard Tucker: I think -- well, it's a mixed bag. I mean, to bring your attention to it was good, but they really sensationalized the kind of stuff that go on. I mean all the stuff that they wrote about that happened at the Super Dome -- you know, some of that stuff happened, but not to the degree that it said that happened. They were reporting shootings all over the place, and stuff like that -- some of that happened, some of it didn't. They reported they blew the levees to get the people, to get out, to change the city -- it didn't make any sense at all. I mean, you know, who stayed here during the hurricane to blow the levees?

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You know? And I think that the idea that *(...can't understand...)* but it was the poor people that took the hit, and the rich people were fine and dandy, and the rich people flooded the city so they could get rid of the poor people, and everybody was affected. They didn't know.

But like I told my in-laws who came in, and they came in like maybe six or eight months after it was over. We took them and drove them around, and they were shocked. They were **shocked**! "It flooded here? It flooded here?"

I said, "Yeah, I haven't even taken you to St. Bernard where the water was over the houses." You know?

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: My aunt had a house that there was no water line because it went straight over the house.

Erica Taylor: Wow. That's interesting. I've seen -- I have some people that I know,

and it was 2008, and they still had some issues. That is when I moved here, 2008.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, just drive around. You can still see the places where people haven't done anything.

Erica Taylor: It's interesting. Well, I think that's about it. Is there anything that you think could have been done better or differently?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well...

Erica Taylor: Communications-wise.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, I think we've addressed some of the things. There was a, you know, it was hard to get the web site up and things like that, because I don't think that had really thought that out a lot. They've got back-up plans and all this kind of stuff, and all the data was constantly backed-up somewhere else, and so they didn't worry about that. So actually you wouldn't have to come back and get your computer, I don't think.

I'm lucky. My computer, the only thing that was working on my computer was the hard drive -- the screen -- I had a -- my office used to be over there. And the door was locked, and something crashed through the window, so the wind went through like that, so everything came off. I had some paintings, some posters on the wall that all crashed. Fortunately the hard drive was actually underneath, and not setting up. It was one of the old ones so it was protected.

Erica Taylor: Wow. Interesting.

Mr. Richard Tucker: It still had issues. We still had issues when I tried to use it.

Erica Taylor: But it was better than nothing?

Mr. Richard Tucker: It was better than starting from scratch with nothing.

Erica Taylor: Yeah, I bet. What was I going to say? So the university has updated or changed or modified things based on what they learned?

Mr. Richard Tucker: They are still using E2 Campus, but I think they are about to go to something else that is a little more upgraded and stuff like that. But we constantly tell the people, especially during hurricane season, to check the web site, bookmark where the emergency pages, toll free telephone number they can call, and all that stuff. That's where you are going to get your information about what is happening at Xavier. Don't listen to what's on the news and stuff like that.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay. And what was my other question? I had one more. What was it? Do you deal with, I guess, on-going concerns either from new students, or even maybe potential faculty members, or even existing people in the Xavier community about the preparedness if it happens again.

Mr. Richard Tucker: One thing they have changed is that, when the hurricane comes, this next time, nobody stays on campus.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Nobody. That have put in a thing for the students and they have to sign. They have to have a hurricane plan, and they have to sign it. This is what I'm going to do, this is how I'm going to get out, because they are not going to stay on campus, because that was really a touchy situation. You've seen the pictures, I mean, it was just -- the canals flooded, and they would hear at night, and all this kind of stuff, and they had a lot of trouble getting the kids out, because when the buses came for them, everybody else wanted to get on the buses that were for Xavier. So they've changed that so we shouldn't have that problem. There were some people from off campus who came here to stay, which they shouldn't have done.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Like my old boss, Paul Keithwood, died in '92 -- every time there was a hurricane, he'd come to Xavier to his office would work. You know? He would think he's safer. Well, they don't want people. They are responsible for people that are out there, so they stopped all of that kind of stuff, so that's a good thing. And I think with the passage of time, I don't think that's an issue particularly right now, it's not for people thinking about, but you do have occasion -- well, I don't deal with the parents and stuff like that, but you hear, people will call up and say, "Well, the loans (?) all right?" I think they're more concerned with that we've recovered from the past one as opposed to what is going to happen if it happens again.

Erica Taylor: Okay. That's understandable.

Mr. Richard Tucker: I mean, it only happened once. *(...can't understand...)* some '54, and it's happened once.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You've had Betsy, which kind of knocked things out for a little bit for a while, but it wasn't the same --

Erica Taylor: Magnitude.

Mr. Richard Tucker: -- the thing that just happened here. We have had a lot of close calls, but they always turn right.

Erica Taylor: Okay. Spoken like a true native!

Mr. Richard Tucker: In Katrina, you would turn. The sad thing is when --

Erica Taylor: Every time there is one, I sit on pins and needless 'cause I'm from the Midwest. Tornados? I know how to do those. Hurricanes? I am not as comfortable.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, I think that's the thing about hurricanes. You know, if you've got a tsunami or a tornado or a plane crashes or something like that, it happens and you react. Okay? Hurricane, you sit there for a week watching this thing go all the way across the ocean, and you've got to worry about it the whole time.

Erica Taylor: Yeah, that's true.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You know? And even when it gets, you know, close, you know, they tell you you've got to evacuate, and it's going to take three days to evacuate, well, I can't leave my job three days ahead of time every time something goes into the Gulf.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Like for Katrina, my son lives in Baton Rouge. So my daddy was like, who is now 93, we had to get him somewhere, so my brother and him went to my son's one room apartment.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Okay? We ended up --

Male Speaker: I'm available.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Okay, we will be finished in just a minute. So we waited until the very last minute to go, because the only place we could go was minute Sumrall, Mississippi, which is by Hattisburg, and so 4:00 o'clock that Sunday morning, I said, "We're getting up at 4:00, and if it's still coming, we are getting the hell out of coming. So we had no trouble, because everybody was going that way, and the storm was going *(...Demonstration...)* Well, we went up to Sumrall and that thing passed -- the eye of the storm passed right over us, but at least we wouldn't drown.

Erica Taylor: Right, that's true.

Mr. Richard Tucker: They put us up in this -- her boyfriend, that the family has the big like, they own a lot of land, and they have a bunch of small houses on it, and the one that used to be the grandpa's house, they turned it into a day nursery, so they let us stay there. All right. So we got there, the mom was leaving. She didn't want to stay. She was leaving going to Georgia. I said, "Well, we can't go because I've got three people in the car, plus me and my wife, plus three cats, plus a bird, and I am not taking that all to a hotel in Georgia, drive the seven hours back."

So we stayed, and the kid and the girls were just like, "I want to go (...can't understand...) .

I said, "No, we will be fine."

So grandpa comes by. "Well, I'm so glad y'all are staying here. You know, I'm glad y'all are staying here. You know, we used to have a house right there, but Camille came through and smashed it."

Erica Taylor: Oh, no!

Mr. Richard Tucker: Which is the other historic hurricane from Mississippi. So the girl's eyes look *(...Demonstration...)* like that, and I said, "We're not going anywhere. We will be safe, fine." For a minute there I thought they were going to take off.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Richard Tucker: But we survived. I remember looking out the window and there were like three giant pecan trees in this soy field, okay? And then they had a big oak tree here with a swing set that we had just been swinging on a couple of hours ago. I remember the wind was blowing like crazy. I looked out the door, and I looked at my (...can't understand...) and said, "It's not too bad." I said, "The swing set didn't even move." And I go like this, and the swing set was down; the oak tree was down, boom, boom, all three pecan trees, just like boom, toof! All went down! And you go, Wow!

Erica Taylor: I could only imagine. Gustav was enough for me.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So then when Gustav came we evacuated to Baton Rouge.

Erica Taylor: Right, just in case.

Mr. Richard Tucker: For Gustav.

Erica Taylor: That's surprising. It was worse in Baton Rouge.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, yeah, yeah. My son, and the thing is, my son eventually two days later, he came back to our house because he had no power.

Erica Taylor: I was out for 11 days. So...

Mr. Richard Tucker: Well, my daughter works at Odyssey House, and she had passes -- her boss had passes to get back into the city. So she had to go pick him up at the hotel in Baton Rouge, because he was leaving 'cause his dad was sick and he had to get him back, to *(...can't understand...)* and stuff like that. So I mean, not two hours after the storm had passed, we had to drive from his apartment all the way to the hotel which is by the river to go pick him up. No lights were working; the wind was still blowing like crazy, and stuff like that, so that was kind of scary going all the way over there in the rain. It was interesting, but it was kind of scary.

Erica Taylor: I bet. You all are very brave.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So, hopefully, we will never have to do that again.

Erica Taylor: I hope not either.

Mr. Richard Tucker: I mean, I seriously thought, I said, "Okay, we can stay in Baton Rouge. I am not coming back. I don't have a job there, so..."

Erica Taylor: So what made you come back?

Mr. Richard Tucker: The job. My wife had a job. Actually I think it works out well for us because my wife works at Cabrini High School. She is like the assistant principal, and they decide to have a satellite school because a lot of the kids were up in that area. So they had a satellite school with Holy Cross High School, which is where my son had gone to school, and when the school up there said, "You can come use our school, after hours." So they had a night

school. So Holy Cross and Cabrini had the kids both coed. They were a boys' school and a girls' school, but now they were together, so that was kind of interesting. It was real close to where my son -- one phone call to my son, and I said, "I knew that the I10, the twin spans was wiped out. So I said, "Don't... " So the opened the city, and the only way to get there was to come from Baton Rouge. So we got one text message to him and said, "Find me an apartment. Sign a year lease if you have to, but find me an apartment. And the next day he – *(interruption)* It's a good thing he did because they were all gone after that. And fortunately, as fate would have it, one of the people he contacted when he contacted them to do the deal, had actually gone to school with my wife.

Erica Taylor: Oh wow, small world.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, yeah. So we had an apartment. So you are still paying your mortgage on this house that you are not using, plus you are paying for the apartment that you are in now, like that. So it was interesting. So I called Xavier, and Xavier was right there. Our Lady of the Lake was really close to Elrod (?). So he contacted -- we contacted each other in Baton Rouge, and the photographer who was also married (?), and those are the only three people in our particular area that were working during that period. Then when we came back they started hiring some other people back. So it was just me, Warren, and the photographer.

Erica Taylor: Okay. For how long was it just you all?

Mr. Richard Tucker: Until January when we came back. I am not sure, it might have been a month or so before they hired the other people back. But they kept people on salaries for the longest time.

Erica Taylor: Wow. Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Then they finally stopped it at some point.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay. They probably had to.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Yeah, you don't have no money coming in. So it was interesting.

Erica Taylor: Okay, well is there anything else you would like to add that maybe I didn't ask?

Mr. Richard Tucker: No, I probably said too much, but --

Erica Taylor: You're fine. And I probably won't use everything. It's just better to have it and not need it.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Oh yeah. He was more actively involved in coming down here. He was administration, so he got to go when the president and all that was going on, he would go to the meetings and stuff like that, and he would just come back and tell me about it because I was living in Baton Rouge. So I had no power or no nothing. So I was just dipping (?).

Erica Taylor: You dipped and worked though. Well, I'm glad that you all made it through and that you're flourishing at this point.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Flourishing. It's still, you know, you're still trying to get over that. I think the biggest thing that hurt us was, a lot of kids came back, but it was the next year, your freshmen class was a quarter of what it was the year before, and that every year that comes with you, because that freshmen class never got any bigger.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Richard Tucker: So now the classes are bigger and getting close to what we'd like them to be at, so in a couple of years we will be much better, but you're still being in the aftermath.

Erica Taylor: So it's still an ongoing process. You said you had a publication that goes mostly to perspective students and stuff. Do you still at this point address those things, or try to ...

Mr. Richard Tucker: I think we are trying to move beyond that.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: When the president talks he will mention stuff like that, but we are trying to move beyond that.

Erica Taylor: Move beyond. Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: You know, just trying to show with everything's happened, and everything's going on, and we're back to normal, which is pretty much, it is. I mean, you know, there's nothing really that you need here that aint here. It killed all the oysters, but you know.

Erica Taylor: And that seems to be -- that strategy seems to be working.

Mr. Richard Tucker: They have done some -- I've got some over here. You will see a few houses, those big two story houses, they just built those. Those are properties we used to own, or properties we bought since the storm that had to be razzed and they got a few money and stuff to replace all of it. So we bought 10 or 12 of those. Which had really helped out the neighborhood there; we don't own all of that stuff. *(...can't understand...)* That's going to be for faculty that they hired that they don't have a place to stay. They can stay there while they come teach, and get organized, and stuff like that.

Erica Taylor: That's a good idea. So you are doing things to, I guess, ensure the longevity, and the continued rebuilding efforts.

Mr. Richard Tucker: They just built the pharmacy building that you see.

Erica Taylor: I've seen that several times off the interstate.

Mr. Richard Tucker: Right next to it is the golden chapel, which has nothing to do with longevity, but it's something they wanted to do for a thousand years, and there are a couple of other projects. So they are moving forward. Stuff like that. If we could just get the enrollment. Right before Katrina hit, we had a record, like 4100, over 4100 kids.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Richard Tucker: I think they would like to be around 38 or something like that, and be comfortable.

Erica Taylor: And do you know what it is right now?

Mr. Richard Tucker: It's about 37 or there about. It's close, but not quite there. And you will get the kids, and if they leave, fork out, or for financial reasons, you know you don't have no kind of buffer.

Erica Taylor: Cushion, right. Okay. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. Richard Tucker: All right. Good luck.

Erica Taylor: I enjoyed talking to you.

*****End of interview*****

Total typed lines excluding heading and conclusion: 494

Erica Taylor
Interview with Mr. Warren Bell
Associate Vice President of University and Media Relations
Xavier University

Erica Taylor: So let's start with some background information.

Mr. Warren Bell: Sure.

Erica Taylor: Tell me about your background, any education, how you came to work in this position, etc.

Mr. Warren Bell: Okay. Well, career-wise, I was a journalist for over 30 years. I started in radio when I was in high school, continued working in news, radio, and TV through college, and then for about 25 or 30 years beyond that, mostly television, but also radio. In addition to I spent 18 years as a part-time faculty member at Dillard University where I taught Mass Communications and journalism courses.

Erica Taylor: Did you work with Dr. Broussard?

Mr. Warren Bell: Actually I worked with Dr. Jinx Broussard quite extensively there, and got to know her as a professional journalist when she was working not at Dillard but in the mayor's office, so we've had -- we've known each other for quite a few years, watched our kids grow up and that type stuff, so she is one of my dear friends. That's one of the reasons you dropped her name, so I had to say yes.

Erica Taylor: She's my chair, so...

Mr. Warren Bell: But I do have quite a bit of news experience, and that's what I came here with. I mean I had done some consulting work also after I left TV news, but I came here with what is generally a news background.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And when I started to experience was, well first of all, we started addressing issues like the web site. The web site was pretty static when I got here. We didn't change it for months at a time. It was a web site. It technically allowed you to get to different portals that were important for students and faculty, but it was not an attractive medium, if you will, and I, of course, looked at that and said, "Well, geez, if I can't run a TV station, I can sure run this web site, sort of like a news operation." I had remembered when I was a student way back when at Yale University, Yale always had what it called "The News Bureau".

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And those were the people that cranked out the news releases, put out the news information to the campus, and Xavier coincidentally for the last seven years since I got

here, and I think today or tomorrow makes seven years --

Erica Taylor: Oh wow. Well, congratulations!

Mr. Warren Bell: -- in terms of my longevity here. That's not really longevity by Xavier standards, you know, 40 years is a substantial employee here.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: Mr. Tucker, whom you've interviewed already, has been here over 30 years, so I am just a baby; I know that, but I can say with some pride that over those seven years we have certainly taken the web site to a different level, and we operate with a different premise. It is rare that we don't change something every day. The home page is updated at least once a week. We do have that very dynamic in terms of interactivity news bureau where you can read just a bit any news release that we have created over the past six or seven years. Read news clippings, we have photo image banks that we keep up there, taking up, you know, server space, but thank God for the cyber world.

Erica Taylor: There you go!

Mr. Warren Bell: But when people for example, say, we'd like some photos of your president, I simply refer them to our links. We have a series of portraits of the president covering his early career, as well as his mid-career, and now the senior years of his time spent here. And again, I know that that's because I come from that news background, but one issue we began to look at prior to August of 2005 -- I'm going to try to segue here and get you where I know you want to go -- is in the area of emergency communications, because we could control what we were doing externally, but back then my operating premise was, well, you know, having come from that news anchor desk, we would just send it to the different stations if there is an issue like a storm threatens and you tell your employees to leave, we traditionally relied as most grammar schools and high schools did on having the folks at WWL TV, WDSU TV, etc --

Erica Taylor: I know, the closing, right.

Mr. Warren Bell: Or you know, fax them the information, e-mail them the information, and they're going to get it out there right, right? Well, no! Because then you have the experience of employees calling in and saying, "Well, gee, Channel 6 said we have to go back to work day AFTER tomorrow," and what happened was in many cases these were sometimes production interns or news interns or even news editors who are rushing trying to absorb a lot of stuff, and they call themselves, "distilling your message" down into just what is equivalent of TV crawl on the bottom of the screen, but if it's wrong, it's wrong.

And they try to get it out there for you, but we began to say, what can we do to control our information, and make sure that employees know they can go some place, even if they have evacuated and don't have a TV right away, and we had the experience with something called Agnes, or whatever, in terms of bad weather events preceding, and so I got together with my counterparts in the technology office, and we started saying, "Well, what can we do?" And

fortunately for us, pre-Katrina, we created an emergency phone line so that if nothing else, you can always your cell phone call 1-800-520-XULA or whatever it is. You can get that off our web site. And that phone line we have kept ever since. We don't keep it active all day, all week long, but if there is anything going on, technology triggers it up, and then all I have to do is phone in, hit a code, and I can record that message, which we used quite a bit after Katrina, and during those critical nights right around the storm itself.

Likewise we understood that if you leave the campus and shut things down, the generators are only so good, if they kick in when power gets caught off, and if you let power get caught off, without first turning your stuff off, then you have all kinds of data recovery issues, so what do we do if we know that we are leaving the campus for at least a couple of days, and the answer became, we create a hosted web site off campus without all the bells and whistles of our full web site, but it gave us the ability to continue from a distance to maintain a home page, emergency messaging was retained, etc.

So when August rolled around in '05, we had the advantage, and I'm proud to say, we had one advantage that I am not sure that any other institution in New Orleans had before the cite was put in place, and that was both the telephone system, as well as the Internet or the hosted web site off campus. I think it's in Denver or some place. Bottom line was it enabled me, even though I was in the midst of evacuating with my own family, fortunately to Baton Rouge where we were already paying for my daughter's apartment rent --

Erica Taylor: Well, there you go!

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, she was an LSU undergrad at the time, and so we just sort of slept on the floors and stuff, and obviously within a week, we knew it was not going to be a matter of leaving right away, so I found an apartment, and then we operated from Baton Rouge our emergency communications operations, and our on-going recovery communications operations. I think we called our newsletters "Road to Recovery Series 1" or what have you.

But we found ourselves in Baton Rouge. We did have tools. Our technology people were very "cracker Jack". We luckily had a regular operating web site within two or three weeks after a disaster, because our friends of Xavier of Ohio contacted us and said, "Look, if there is anything we can do Internet-wise," so they hosted our site as a courtesy to us for at least three or four months until we got things closer to being back in order here on campus.

And meanwhile on campus, there was so much activity going on, we ran through about $40,000,000 in three months just doing the kinds of repairs that people now have the photographic, you know, record of. But what we tried to do, Mr. Tucker and I, I had employees who had not yet checked in with me, but Richard fortunately did. Richard also being an LSU man, and having lots of friends there, found a place quickly in Baton Rouge that he could operate from, and in the meantime the university created a host site for us physically office space wise at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital which has the college right next to it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And since there was a -- you know, they had a decent relationship with us anyway because of the whole health care professional and paraprofessional training that they do, so it was a very nice fit. We had basically a glorified classroom, but we had long tables in there, and one of the things I did early on also, was came back here in early September, and physically had to unplug my computer, Richard's computer, our alumni relations computers, because data recovery was critical, and you know, when we left on that Friday evening, everyone said, "Ehh, we will be back Monday. Another false alarm," and clearly that wasn't the case.

Erica Taylor: It didn't happen that way!

Mr. Warren Bell: But in the dark with the slime on the steps and everything else, we -- meaning "I" -- personally came up here and rescued my stuff, Richard's files off his PC -- I'm a Mac person -- and then we had the alumni relations and the development people, we wanted to grab those hard drives, so I didn't bring out all the monitors. In my case, I brought monitors because I didn't know how long it would take to get new equipment. You know, Dell and other companies started sending us brand new stuff, but I was clear. I was a dodo without my Mac! I didn't want to go back to a PC environment!

Erica Taylor: I understand. I'm a Mac person too. It's a little nerve-wracking to go backwards.

Mr. Warren Bell: Now back then, the Mac G5 --

Erica Taylor: Was it the big round one?

Mr. Warren Bell: You needed two hands. That was that big aluminum case that weighed about 30 or 40 pounds, but that was one *bad* machine. I hated turning that in to get the new. Now I am not so bad.

Erica Taylor: Yes, that's nice.

Mr. Warren Bell: You like my new toy -- two months.

Erica Taylor: Yes. I want one of those!

Mr. Warren Bell: So we had a pretty good situation in a fairly short amount of time. We quickly had a location from which to do our emergency communications. We were fortunate enough to have had the foresight to enable ourselves with two means of communication, and I was very clear, not everybody was going to have access to a web site or even e-mail right away.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: I didn't even have a BlackBerry back then, or I think I had just gotten it, was just learning to do with that thing. In fact, I'm wrong, there was no Blackberry, it was one of those Sprint Nextel units that we had here on campus. The beauty of that was, for whatever reason even after e-mail was problematic, we could still two way each other through that little

Nextel click and talk system, and that actually saved us for quite a few weeks until e-mail started, because even in Baton Rouge, e-mail was problematic for a while and there were so many towers down, etc. But we did have those two tools, and I had my camera. I had just acquired a single lens reflex digital camera because the university photographer had issues with his elderly parents, and he didn't get back to work for at least a month. Our Nikon and other stuff was up here anyway, because I had told him keep everything locked up; don't travel with it. But I did have a decent camera, and so I immediately started recording photos. It was clear to me we had to use the web site to put the message out as quickly as possible that we were going to reopen.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And I think some of the notes I shared with you already, for us, that was the overriding message. Don't get too settled. Go enroll in class somewhere else if you are a student. If you are a faculty member, we have a separate message for you, namely, we are going to keep you whole, and even if you want to take a temporary teaching assignment, some of our professors went to work for FEMA as estimators or whatever, but we are paying you to make sure you know, you come back when we reopen in January.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: And I've got to tell you, and Dr. Francis makes jokes about it, and he looks over at me because he lets everyone know that I'm one of the skeptics, but a lot of us wondered, "How can we possibly go from September to January with a weak -- some of us had seen the campus dock had none (??). The president had not seen the campus when he said, "We're going to reopen," and I will always remember the following week we finally got permission from the governor's office to bring a core group of people in. And it was 5 a.m., and I'm standing on Jeff Davis out here looking at the front of *these* buildings that we are in right now, and you could see where stuff had been blown off the roof. One of the buildings had only been dedicated the previous year, and I said, "Oh my God, look at this!" Those fancy, green metal roofs had been peeled like throw away pop top cans off big chunks of it.

And I remember looking at our fiscal affairs officer saying, "There is no way we are going to do this. Dr. Francis must be out of his mind if he thinks we are going to get all this done."

And Ed said, "Warren, he will figure it out when he gets here, and in the meantime, we will just do what we got to do." And we did. Amazingly, it started to come together. But for us it was a matter of getting photos out there, and messages at least every few days to that e-mail list we finally recovered when I grabbed the computers to say we are going to be open, here is what we look like, but look -- as soon as we showed damage photos, we also said, "Look at what is going on." The mitigation teams are in place, the guys with the haz-mat uniforms throwing out old furniture and stuff. The shots of the dormitories, followed by the shots of the dormitories being cleaned out, followed by messages to parents and students, saying, "Look, if you really want to try to retrieve some of these belongings, we have got everything bagged up, and we had it in one of our empty buildings, and there were a couple of days that we had to send the message out, 'This is the weekend you're going to have a chance to drive back into New Orleans to retrieve

whatever you want. Beyond that point, we are going to have to throw some of this stuff out, because frankly, when you see it, you're going to agree, you don't want this stuff."

Erica Taylor: You don't want it, right.

Mr. Warren Bell: If it came off the first floor dorms, especially -- I mean, kids left refrigerators without power, so you had food. And some of them did unfortunately, leave things they shouldn't have, like laptops or jewelry. One man, I remember, calling me, telling me his daughter had a collection of coins he had given her to make sure she always had spare change, and he insisted there were several hundred dollars worth of coins missing.

And it's like, sir, you have to understand, we had so many strangers on this campus wearing those little paper jumpsuits -- I mean, we had a lot of controls in place. You could only come into the campus and leave it one way, but stuff happens.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: And we don't know if some of our own employees didn't find some of that stuff, but those were the personal stories that I guess I will take to my grave with me. But what was very encouraging was knowing, we were quite a -- frankly, Richard and I knew how critical it all was. It's one thing for Dr. Francis to say something on NPR or whatever, but most of our people weren't hearing that stuff either for those first couple of weeks. So what we got out there messaging-wise was critical.

We knew that we had to put out there, that (A), we were coming back, (B) we were going to make good our employees as best we could. Now we didn't -- there were some unpleasant messages that said, "This is going to be your last paycheck until further notice. We can only maintain so many critical staff while we are rebuilding," but I couldn't afford to pay three of my people. When the university photographer returned to duty, obviously he was brought right back on duty because at that point, we weren't just shooting from an editorial standpoint, but we had him shoot every single dormitory room that was cleaned up just to have a record of it.

In fact, there's a couple of CD's burned somewhere with every single room, what it looked like just in case someone said, "You stole this," or "We had this in there." Or if they needed it for insurance purposes, we could say, "Look, you're gonna have to find it." I think Irvin actually shot the room entrance with a follow up shot so that you wouldn't need a genius to figure it out after the fact.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: It was about messaging, about continuing a link. Folks know that we were out there, and interestingly, we began to do things with the web site that we had never done before. I still hadn't gotten to the point where I was prepared to say, "We are going to do a different photo every week." Well, having all these photos to tell the story of recovery got us there.

Erica Taylor: Right. It just happened.

Mr. Warren Bell: We used to do something called, "This Week at Xavier" whatever as a printed piece, and I said, "Well, aint no printing this stuff!" but we then went to an electronic weekly bulletin which has stayed with us since. Because I was already at the point where I didn't want to spend that much money to print stuff, and mail it, and all the other stuff. So we could do our monthly magazine -- Richard still calls it a newsletter -- I said, "Richard, it's a magazine! It's got photos in it, interactivity. We're entering this in the wrong categories! Let me try to put it up for awards!" I'm always thinking about the promotional aspect!

Erica Taylor: There you go.

Mr. Warren Bell: If you don't learn anything else when you get to be my age, if you don't toot your own horn, nobody hears it.

Erica Taylor: That's true.

Mr. Warren Bell: Nobody hears about you. One of the reasons quite frankly, my crass personal selfish reason for wanting you to do a great job with this, is I **want** somebody to tell our story --

Erica Taylor: I'm happy to!

Mr. Warren Bell: We were so focused on the rebuilding, I don't think that I documented and told our story enough later. And I see these people doing seminars to this day on emergency communications and lessons learned from Katrina, and some of these people are people who were floundering when we were on point.

Erica Taylor: That's my whole focus, just looking at, not just this situation, but looking at HBCUs, because they typically don't get the recognition that other institutions do.

Mr. Warren Bell: Understood.

Erica Taylor: That's my initiative. Since I came from an HBCU, I worked in PR at an HBCU, so I know both sides of it.

Mr. Warren Bell: So you understand the things that were on our minds. And I've got to say, our president obviously knew more than any of us did. But his instructions were real -- Mr. Bell, we have got to make sure the students know that we will have a place for them to come back, and we got to make sure that our faculty know that they have been made whole -- there will be some unpleasant news because the faculty was trimmed. We knew we wouldn't have the same enrollment coming back, so we did free some people up to do some things. There are faculty members that say that was just an excuse to get rid of them in particular, it was personal, but you know, compared to other schools that have since been cited for doing some pretty mean things, using the hurricane to blow people out, or eliminate -- Tulane took a lot of heat for that.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: You know, I think we have absolutely everything to be proud of because our focus was always to try to keep our people whole, to be as honest with them as possible, but again, the main message was always going to be, "We are coming back, in case you don't believe it, just look." So there were always these progress reports that we wanted to do basically, and the news bureau allowed us to do that by sending the photos as well as the information. And it was Richard and me, and then when Irving came on as the photographer, Irving would provide the shots for us if I didn't happen to go down and shoot them myself. But that's my shot of Bill Clinton touring the campus. Irving was nowhere around. I couldn't track him down in time, and we found out, you don't get a week in advance when a president is going to visit!

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: He was still the former president, of course, but when we got word, I tried to reach Irving that previous day, but it was clear, heck, I'm grabbing my Olympus, and I'm getting down! That's my shot!

Erica Taylor: Make it work. I don't blame you!

Mr. Warren Bell: Colin Powell, he got the shot. The proof, I guess, is in the pudding, because in January, when we reopened three fourths of students came back. 75%, which I think that's the best number in town.

Erica Taylor: I think so.

Mr. Warren Bell: In terms of percentage of those who were there in August versus those who returned. First of all, several of them didn't open right away. Dillard ended up going to the hotel, which I think -- I understand. I mean, you have a brand new president and most of her senior administrative people she had just brought in -- none of them had a clue about dealing with hurricanes, or what to expect, and then instead of getting a chance to get a little baptism with just a little heat, they got fully immersed in the fire, and then the flood, if you will.

Erica Taylor: It's a lot, yeah.

Mr. Warren Bell: If you remember they had buildings destroyed buildings destroyed by fire, in addition to the buildings wiped out by the flooding. Coming from a 40 year perspective, or in that year, or at that point he had been in office for 35 years, for Dr. Francis, he was very focused.

Erica Taylor: Right. Kind of been there, done that.

Mr. Warren Bell: He looked like Charlton Heston when he comes down from the mountain in *The Ten Commandments.* I mean, it was like he had seen a vision. But he was real clear. And he looked so different to me because that first time I said, "Wow, Doc has never had his hair cut so short before!" I mean, he looked *physically* transformed after the storm.

And we had heard this story of how he had had this dream that he shared with his wife that St. Katharine had actually told him, "Don't worry; we are going to reopen"; I mean, it was -- I don't know, it might have been just urban legend, or campus legend, but I heard that story early on from people who -- there were only a handful of people who I was talking to, and all of them were senior level at that point. But in any event, whatever the vision was, Doc's vision was very clear about us.

Erica Taylor: He had it. Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And so we had to articulate that vision with every doggone message that we sent out.

Erica Taylor: And he was supportive of your efforts?

Mr. Warren Bell: Oh, he understood! They knew what we were doing. It was funny. We were in Baton Rouge. Some of the other departments were operating out of Baton Rouge. Others were in Lafayette closer to him because he relocated at his sister's home in Grand Coteau, which is about a half hour outside of Louisiana. *(He must have meant Lafayette.)* We had other folks as far over as Birmingham, others as far west as Texas because that's where they ended up evacuating to, but it worked pretty well. We had weekly conference calls, you know, set up through AT&T. Everybody dials in, and it was not that different from his regular Wednesday meetings for his senior cabinet members.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Warren Bell: I have all my -- I can show you my handwritten -- I had misplaced this book, so from August 24th, I have loose leaf pages, followed by January 25th picking up our first administrative cabinet meeting on campus, but everything -- I guess I should figure on writing a book someday -- but just what were our objectives going to be, updates from the different areas in terms of what we are going to do to interact with other schools. You know, I had to figure out what needed to get out to the public. Transcribe or transpose that into our messaging, and Richard and I had the job of cranking it out there. And I'm so proud of what we did. I guess that comes out.

Erica Taylor: As you should be.

Mr. Warren Bell: I don't know what we could have done better. I wish I had chronicled everything we did because I was like in the air flying and shooting at the enemy, and I was just doing everything at one time. But it was wonderful. It was a case where I truly felt, you know, God, everything I ever did, the good, the bad, and the ugly, prepared me for this like just about nothing else.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: I had the advantage of still being an active NABJ member, so my journalist buddies, who also knew where I was, started reaching out to me because they had e-

mail addresses and phone numbers, and it was just wonderful how it all sort of fell together. You know, I might be eating dinner on a Sunday and get a call from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and go, "Well hey, Katie, sure, I can talk to you." But I did many an interview standing in the little apartment complex we were living in in Baton Rouge, and I'm trying to remember everything, because I didn't have a lot of information around me. I didn't have that big repository of everything else we had printed, but it was a great experience. I am very proud of our results. Again, I don't think that it's an accident that three fourths of our students elected to come back when all of the news coverage would lead you to conclude that New Orleans was NOT a place to come back to, even if you lived here.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: But we gave up our apartment dutifully in early January, moved into a little place we rented, and again, waited for those two weeks. We engineered the build-up and invited national media and other folks to come see our campus. We are reopening, I think it was the 17th, so we started inviting people to come on board around the 13th or 14th, in case there was someone still out there hesitant about sending their little child back to Xavier, just to let them know, while it's all hell broke loose around us, this is -- I mean, this was a restored campus in January. Every dormitory was reopened with new furniture, new flooring on the first floors -- we still had stuff to fix.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: Be had such a great story to tell and I wasn't shy. I started using the -- well, the journalist in me said, "Well, you can't just call it a miracle." But I said, "near miraculous" and things like that because, you know, what some would have to consider a miracle because I couldn't believe it! I was here and I watched it go on.

Erica Taylor: It's amazing.

Mr. Warren Bell: I would drive in at least two or three times a week to meet somebody from media, or to get some photos if Irving couldn't, and 'cause I was nosy or needed an excuse to run back to my own house to see what was going on -- if anyone had broken in there -- but it was just that it really felt like all of the forces that had been around my life were converging to do something that was really important, and it was -- my kids used to say, "Daddy's more worried about Xavier than us these days," and I said, "But you have to understand, I have to be because Xavier is bigger than us." You can't let this die, and you can't let -- if we can maximize our situation and come back as strong as possible, well, I was clear. So we didn't worry about rebuilding our house for another year after we got back to New Orleans -- actually two years before we started.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, we were kind of unsure about what to do, like any other resident, but for all of that time after we moved back there was still so much to address here in terms of messaging. You know, things we started doing on the web site then, we said, well, hey, we have

got to keep doing this. Again, I'm so happy that it all paid off. My TV skills came to the air when it was time to document our recovery, so I don't know if you actually saw the little YouTube video we created --

Erica Taylor: Not yet, I haven't had a chance to go through everything, but I will be before I write my chapter.

Mr. Warren Bell: If you can't find something, let me know, but we do have the whole -- we create our little souvenir photo book -- what I call the "coffee table book" -- our coffee table special which was a wonderful piece that simply chronicled in pictures and words what had happened in those critical months before we reopened. Coming from the TV news background, I was clear, you know, I had to hire one of my buddies who was a shooter, and let's put something together. So we created like a five and a half minute piece that I thought did a really great job of showing you how far we had come in such a short period. Heavy on the Dr. Francis interviews, but who else would you talk to but the man who steered it through those four months to reopen?

Erica Taylor: Who had the vision?

Mr. Warren Bell: Yep! Oh yeah. And like I said, he loves to tell that story, then he looks over. "There were some of us in the room who didn't believe me when I said -- " and that's when I start blushing because I know he's coming at me then. But it really was a great situation. Again our ability was enhanced by the fact that we had been a little bit foresighted or a little more foresighted then probably a lot of our fellow institutions.

Erica Taylor: So that plan really -- that preplanning actually helped.

Mr. Warren Bell: It saved us without any doubt whatsoever. You know, nowadays, we have the addition of E2 Campus text messaging. In fact we have a brand new system that we are rolling out in January that will allow me to send to voice, text, e-mail, all with the push of a couple of buttons. In fact, if I don't want to take the time to record the message, I can type it, and it has voice software so that the computer voice turns your message into a phone call that is duplicate of with is going out to e-mail and texts. Now the problem with all those things that nobody talks about is, unless your whole campus signs up, since you can't force them to opt in for your information, especially text messages 'cause most people still pay for text messaging one way or the other, it's a little bit of a challenge in that regard, but that's just what publicity and promotion is all about. You've got to make them want to be plugged in when you have things like power outages or water supplies dropping around the city. I think people begin to realize that this is good for stuff other than hurricane advisories, and we have used it that way as well.

Now we are expanding what we had, but I am just -- I consider myself so lucky and blessed to have had colleagues who helped me identify the solutions. I knew we had a problem, but it was not my genius and idea to have the phone system and the computers. It's my colleagues in technology who said, "You know, Warren, we can create a new web site separate from the real web site."

And I said, "What?!" I mean, I was pretty -- I was not very savvy at the time. You know, when I

finally said, "Is there a warrenbell.com?" I realized that somebody I knew had grabbed the name back when I was on television, and couldn't care less about having the Internet or having a web site.

All of that to say I didn't even think that way, but they said, "Well, we can have an emergency web site, and we have been looking at this company that offers you the chance to send out, or to have a web message where anybody can call in and get your information." Now the new stuff allows me to call out. But again, if I don't have every single phone number, then our database --

Erica Taylor: Especially if people are dispersed.

Mr. Warren Bell: So it's still good, and I don't think we will ever get rid of it. We will always have that 800 number so people can say, "Well, gee, let me see if they've got an update in terms of when we come back to campus or whatever. After the first couple of weeks following the storm, the phone recording system went by the way side, because by then we were back up with the emergency web page, followed by the new Xavier web page, and our presumption was by now you have presumably gotten someplace where you can get the information off the web site.

National press did a great job of keeping Xavier in the mix when they came down to do stories. We were very fortunate. I understand that's because we had a good brand anyway. It's great to have a --

Erica Taylor: I was going to say, was it fortunate or was it skill? Was it media relations skill?

Mr. Warren Bell: Listen, I tell everyone, how hard is it for me to have my job when I work for a rock star for a president? I mean, he is the equivalent of a rock star in higher ed; he's the longest sitting president; he's charming and articulate, and has been -- he's served, what -- eight different presidents on matters dealing with education. So how hard do I have to work to get...

Also for almost 20 years, we have been the #1 producer of black kids going to med school. We have more black pharmacists out there than just a bit anybody in the world if you look at our 80 plus years of training pharmacists, long before anybody else jumped on the bandwagon. For whatever reason, Mother Katharine, three years after we opened our doors and were a university, she's opening a College of Pharmacy, which was pretty audacious here in Louisiana because since none of them had a place to go to work. Unless, they were going to open up their own pharmacy, like some of the black pharmacists did. Otherwise they would all go to New York or L.A. or places where racist Walgreens would still hire them to work in the black neighborhoods of their stores, where their stores were located. Wouldn't let them work in the others.

Erica Taylor: Right. They had a job.

Mr. Warren Bell: That was a pretty big deal to have those kind of careers early on, coming out of here, so you know, we have always had a great story to tell, but in having this president for nearly 40 years even when Katrina hit. He is known by everyone. I mean, NPR had him on

the phone almost right away.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Warren Bell: He's got buddies in media. His son is good friends with some of the people at CNN, so CNN was on the phone in previous hurricanes, so they had phone numbers and were able to track him down. There were times when I was a little frustrated because I said, "You know, Dr. Francis, could you at least let me know when the media calls you before me, so I can be on the same page?!" But again, it just amplifies how easy it is. I'm affiliated with a great product, name recognition, a great leader, and that all helped in the telling of our story. Now I'd love to take credit, but I am not taking credit for things that were just good circumstances for me to fall into.

Was it a blessing for me to come from a news background? Obviously. I am not shy about saying it was my idea to make this a much more aggressive place when it came to using the web site.

Erica Taylor: You had only been here -- if you said you've been here seven years, you had been here two years.

Mr. Warren Bell: I got here in December of '03. So all of '04 I was here and then most of '05. I had a good year and a half plus before Katrina hit, so I was not...

Erica Taylor: It wasn't your first day.

Mr. Warren Bell: I was certainly not wet behind the ears, and I was -- frankly, I was in here long enough to have fallen for the place, and to feel real passionate about the place. I mean, I can tell stories of people at my level who show very little engagement in the campus recovering world. They were hustling new jobs and stuff. That's just -- for me, I was in it to win it. This was my employer. I understood the importance of this institution. There was this, the overall bigger picture also. New Orleans had to have these kinds of institutions come back if it was ever going to have any success coming back overall as a city.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: So I was, I understood I had a job to do. I loved doing it, and I will say again, I don't think that it's any accident that God placed me on different paths over the last 30 or 40 years to prepare me with the ... *(...can't understand...) (vast variety?)* Most TV news people are fairly 1-dimensional in my humble observation. I was blessed in having left TV for a while and having done other things over the years, and then to have done the whole college teaching piece, so I was already used to the dynamics of a college campus. I understood that some of the politics there are as complicated and dangerous as politics in general can be in other corporate situations, so there were no real surprises.

Having covered hurricanes as a journalist as well, I had that thing going for me, and then having a great back-up person, I mean, I can't say enough about Richard. Richard is like a work horse. He is like a generator running on diesel. You can count on dependable --

Erica Taylor: He just told me he took orders.

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, but he's the one I can't on to say, "Are you sure you want to do that?" because sometimes I'm all over the place, and it comes out before I fully think about it.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: It's an interesting complement. We are clearly very different personalities.

Erica Taylor: Yes, I could tell that.

Mr. Warren Bell: Yet I think it works very well. Not just for that reason, but you know, that's my right hand person.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: If I drop dead, I hope they have enough sense to tell him to run the shop until they do whatever they are going to do ultimately leadership-wise. And we have a good working relationship. When things started out, I arrived here as the guy who got the job he applied for, and they told him, "Well no, we are still looking. We don't want to promote you from within. We want somebody else to come in with some new ideas," and that was me. And he's said since then, "You were the right person." You know?

Erica Taylor: That's a compliment.

Mr. Warren Bell: But we work well together. You know, we swap our stories about raising our kids together, and all that stuff. Just to have somebody that dependable and then have him so close made a big difference. There were just a lot of different things that converged to give us, I think, a great position to be in given the disaster we had just gone through.

Erica Taylor: Right. Interesting. Well, that was all very helpful. I think you answered all of my questions --

Mr. Warren Bell: I know I just go all over the place.

Erica Taylor: -- in just talking to me, and I love when that happens. I mean, you're a journalist, so you know how that goes. You're an easy interview.

Mr. Warren Bell: I know some of the things you want, but if you have anything else, go ahead. Check your list, make it twice.

Erica Taylor: Make sure!

Mr. Warren Bell: And you know of course, I will reply to any remaining lingering questions you have later.

Erica Taylor: Yes, I'm sure 'cause when I actually sit down and write the chapter.

Mr. Warren Bell: I'm even wordier when I'm writing off the top of the head. I wish I had done what you did. I entertain.

Erica Taylor: She always wants more from me, so the more you give me, the more I can give her, so it's great.

Mr. Warren Bell: I should have bitten the bullet and gone up and done that.

Erica Taylor: Well, that's definitely what it was, biting the bullet.

Mr. Warren Bell: 'Cause her superiors had asked me over the years to consider coming up there. You know, I know they are still aggressively trying to get more black candidates in, and it looks like they are succeeding now, but oh well, even without the degree I made a pretty decent professor!

Erica Taylor: Oh, I can tell!

Mr. Warren Bell: I had the occasion to be invited -- this is a strange because this place never considered me qualified. This is a place where you must have the Ph.D or they won't even consider bringing you in even in Mass Com courses!

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Warren Bell: So you have all these Ph.D's running around who have never done anything in the actual business, but I was invited to the final exam for radio and TV announcing. And she had it set up almost like an *American Idol* scenario where she had four people coming from the outside world. Now one of them was a Xavier graduate from last year whose got her first job writing scripts for TV news next door, but she was the other *(...can't understand...),* so I said, "Oh, I guess my job is to be Simon for this, huh?"

I warned them in advance, I said, "First of all, I'm right upstairs, and not one of you has ever come up and asked me to listen to your audition tape or whatever." But they get up there, and they do this reading, and I'm saying, "God, no one's ever really worked them, or prepared them for the real world out there!" They don't care if they have had a course in radio or TV announcing.

Erica Taylor: Can you do it?

Mr. Warren Bell: I'm listening to all 20 of you who just got up there and I only have notes next to two of you that says "potential is there, but"... But I enjoy doing all those things. I think it helped me have a better way to look at this job. I don't approach it like some just some TV guy who ended up here because he had nothing else to do. I actually had a lot of other things to prepare me for this, and that's good. I consulted colleges for a while after I left TV, and went over to Jackson State and gave them some advice on things to do in terms of their whole

communications program, and then when this thing popped up, I was getting a little disillusioned with the free-lance PR world. I didn't like some of the clients I had to do stuff for.

Erica Taylor: I understand.

Mr. Warren Bell: And I didn't want to have my 20+ years of credibility in the market as that news persona get cheapened for a few bucks just 'cause somebody wants me to do a spot advocating something that I know is not good for my folks in particular. And you end up getting asked to do that kind of stuff.

Erica Taylor: I've been there.

Mr. Warren Bell: If you have any sphere of influence, or have that spokesperson quality, and I didn't want to be a spokesperson for that I didn't believe in, so this job came up and it was a great opportunity. Seven years later, I tell people, "Look, I am not going anywhere." And right now I have a daughter here enjoying tuition thanks to my being employed here.

Erica Taylor: There you go!

Mr. Warren Bell: I have another daughter probably applying, but even if those weren't the case, A -- I would not want to retire, because that's not my personality. I dread the thought of retiring and having nothing to do but sit around the house and wait for a honey-do assignment. I just dread it.

Erica Taylor: Not your style.

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, in my observation, men stop remaining vital when they stop having a reason to get up every morning. And that reason needs to be more than the fact that I'm still alive, and I'm retiring, to me. To me, men start to atrophy emotionally as well as physically if they don't have them forcing them to get up and say, "Now wait, what did I have to do today?" I live my life, sort of, "Have I done this yet?" but I do think it keeps you on point and keeps you sharp and all that kind of stuff, so I'm clear, I want to be busy until the day they have peel the pen off my fingers and say, "Ms. Bell, you want to come clear up these things in his office?" But I just like the notion of continuing to work. And I may be under the influence of a certain college president who is 80 years old and shows no signs of wanting to leave this place.

There's kind of a culture around here where you literally just keep working, but you're in service. Who could complain about who you serve, and the people that benefit from this institution, all those students? We are still historically black and majority of black, although we are much more diverse than we used to be. For me as a black man, it's nice to be here at this stage in my career doing whatever I can to help spread the word about us, and keep students interested in us so web site is critical to me. That's why we put YouTube there. Our admissions approaches are not exactly *(...Speaking in French...sounds like "au curant")* in some respects, but I was clear, we had to have something other than printed brochures for students to turn into. So when you hit our YouTube link on the home page, normally it takes you right to that first in a series of admissions videos answering questions about campus life and stuff like that.

And again, I never was quite that ambitious, but after you cut your teeth on Katrina, and you say, "Well, hell, we are going to use this 'til there's a better tool that comes around." Now I'm still chicken -- you know, what about Twitter, Facebook. I have my staff assigned to keep us up-to-date on that stuff, but I don't have my own Facebook persona. I don't tweet. My buddies who are still in news, say, "You know, these days, when you are an anchor, you have to do that, or they tell you that you are not being a cooperative anchor."

Erica Taylor: Well, I think in the news business, so much breaking news is having --

Mr. Warren Bell: All of that is driving that way now. Oh, I know; I understand. I'm glad I was in that when I was in that 20 years prior.

Erica Taylor: Everything happens for a reason.

Mr. Warren Bell: Everything happens for a reason. That certainly is the way I've looked at everything here for these last seven years. And certainly that year and a half leading up to Katrina, you know, sometimes I believe in that saying, where people end up having more luck than sense. I mean, we had the good sense to say, "You know, this doesn't work when you just send the info to the TV stations and the radio station. So we, if anything, the greatest spark of genius was understanding we needed to address it, and then having those guys in technology say, "You know, man, we have got tools, we can... "And the administration didn't even question it. They understood. And I think we all realized later, oh my God, thank goodness we had done those things.

Those things were only put in place a few months before, and thank God.

Erica Taylor: Amazing.

Mr. Warren Bell: I will just say it again, thank God we had it. And you shoot me an e-mail when you need to ask me those follow-up questions and Jinx insist on it!

Erica Taylor: I'm sure there will be some.

Mr. Warren Bell: And tell her please forgive me for not getting back to her earlier this semester, but if she needs me next semester via Skype or I will drive up in person, I will be happy to drive up in person.

Erica Taylor: I will let her know that. Two more questions and then I will let you go on about your day.

Mr. Warren Bell: Go on, sure!

Erica Taylor: What were they?

Mr. Warren Bell: You see?

Erica Taylor: Let's see. The big one was outside of Katrina, because you told me about the staffing and all of that, now in 2010, *(2011?)* what is the structure of your office? How many employees, were there enough jobs?

Mr. Warren Bell: We are back to the complement of people we had before, and if you shoot me an e-mail, I will send you some descriptions, but my job overall is to supervise what they do. I get a little "hands on" sometimes. I maybe guilty of overdoing it when it comes to rewriting every single news release just to show there was another way to rewrite it. But I have a media relations manager whose job is primarily obviously that vital contact with the press for notices of events, statements after we have a case in court, or whatever. But obviously the media relations. Richard, I think, probably described his role, or his multifaceted role.

Erica Taylor: Yes.

Mr. Warren Bell: Richard, I renamed Director of Publications as opposed to whatever we called him before, because you know, he really has an incredible responsibility doing the print stuff, as well as maintaining the online stuff on a weekly basis. Fortunately he does an incredible job. My job is usually to say, "Okay, now, that's a little stodgy, let me sweeten the way you said that." So I do my wordsmithing to his stuff, but it's a joy when it's already written well, and you don't have to worry about basic grammar and things like that.

My third professional staff employee is my, I call her "Marketing and Special Projects" because she is sort of do anything I tell her that does not go to automatically go to media relations or whatever. But Trina's up front there, and does everything from working on ads, marketing and special projects person who will do things like assist me with coordinating some of our TV projects. We're just completing albeit, quite late, a YouTube piece we are creating on the Obama visit to our campus. I was not allowed to hire someone, and I have reminded my boss several times that that was the dumbest thing we ever did, not hiring our own professional video photographer to shoot the visit of a sitting president of the United States. Part of the problem was the White House was so strict about what they wouldn't allow us to shoot, and we ended up using some of our own students with their gear, and they have decent gear, but they just are not up to where they need to be. But what we're trying to do as we do more use of video, Trina is my marketing person, so whether it's coming up with a tentative budget for advertising or what have you, that is my third professional person.

Irving Johnson is the university photographer which sort of speaks for itself. Fortunately he has great skills with PhotoShop and things like that. We have often used him to design things rather than take it out-of-house and pay somebody to do it.

My VP does have a graphic designer on his staff. She doesn't actually, in an odd twist, she doesn't report to me first, and then him, but I'm okay with it, but I am not sure she would have felt... We do have one graphic designer, but she technically reports to institutional advancement and does not do a lot of our work per se. But we do work together. We are doing a series of billboards right now. We worked on the billboard for our benefit concert just a few weeks ago. But we tend to have more events that a lot of university advancement offices, so part of my time, especially with my marketing person is spent planning advertising budgets.

I just spent $26,000 last month on our benefit concert trying to promote ticket sales for that, and I wish I had 20 more, but in New Orleans the concert business is a tricky thing, and I would be happy if we didn't promote concerts every -- it's very challenging. Even people who do it for a living will tell you New Orleans is a tough town to do a sell out crowd to, because there's always so many different events competing for people's attention, and then you have the economic factors. It's hard to sell 4000 seats when the seats start at $50 and up. But that's just some of the stuff we end up doing. We still work on any given day with admissions on recruiting brochures. College of Pharmacy may need a newsletter, and who are they going to come to? It would be nice if they had their own in-house person, but the reality is, we are the people they turn to for that also.

And I tell my staff, you have to understand, we are for better or worse, the university's in-house full-service agency, so we have to deal with media relations, public relations, advertising as it comes up. If the receptionist up front doesn't know who should handle a call, and it's off-the-wall, who's going to get it? We do.

Erica Taylor: I remember those days. I worked at PR in Hampton.

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, you know, sure.

Erica Taylor: We're like the PR office / the operator.

Mr. Warren Bell: Well, yeah, because the operator is real clear, hey if I'm confused or I don't get it, I'm sending it to them. The people over there, God bless them, have the ability to figure out who needs to finally answer this question. So it's -- what I love about it is it's never the same thing, as you know having done it yourself. It's the closest thing to the news biz, I still get to be privy to stuff before other people are. I still get to repeat it and tell the rest of the world about it. Or supervise how it gets put out there. So I could think of a whole lot of unhappier scenarios for an African American man approaching 60 years old in a town that has never been real friendly. When it comes to those kinds of things, I tell my buddies, "Hey, I still got a job; I still got benefits; and I could still say almost every day how proud I am to be here and what I'm affiliated with." So what could complain?

Erica Taylor: Right. So it doesn't sound like you can!

Mr. Warren Bell: We returned basically to the staff we had before minus an administrative assistant and frankly I could never find enough stuff for a secretary to do for me anyway. If I'm writing a letter, I would never dream of having somebody write the letter for me. I'm going to write it better, and I am going to write it faster. So and I'm too impatient to sit down to dictate one, so the only thing we don't have that I had prior to Katrina was an administrative assistant. But we have a receptionist up on the other side who has always looked out for me when it comes to helping out with those once or twice a year chores for making sure I've got fresh purchase orders in place for my vendors and things like that.

I am blessed even though we have some issues here now finance-wise, like all universities. No one, I don't think, would even consider my little four man operation needs to be trimmed back

because of the volume of stuff we do. I would humbly submit that there isn't an office anywhere on campus where four people crank out as much or do as much with as much variety as we do. So having issued that brag point, I'm finished. You said there was a second question.

Erica Taylor: One more. I wrote it down because I thought about it while you were speaking. What is your opinion of the media coverage and the media reception to you all during the Katrina situation?

Mr. Warren Bell: I can't say enough. I can't say enough about how good it was. First of all, it was great to have someone who media already had familiarity with. I mean, Dr. Francis had been interviewed by PBS, on NPR, CNN, what's her name -- Kara Phillips -- is almost like a stepdaughter because she's very close friends with one of his sons, and so all they did was pick up the phone and call his son, Tim, and say, "We want to get to your dad," and the next thing I know, my president's on CNN. I'd love to take credit for it, but it's really great --

Erica Taylor: So you thought like the coverage and the tone was fair?

Mr. Warren Bell: Absolutely. I think, and I would like to think that we helped shape that by having such a positive message. I mean, we were clear from Day 1, we're coming back. We encourage our students to find some place to go, but only for that semester, because in January, we will be reopened, and by God, we were. So that really made -- I can't say enough. And let me be very clear. I'm talking about mainstream, network, level media as well as the people that you might expect like some of my counterparts in black media for example.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: It was great to have them, but what was really encouraging was the way the overall media responded to our story, and frankly, I think were quite attracted to our story because it was pretty compelling to see people hell-bent on coming back at a time when even the city didn't have its act together yet. And there were very few services to count on beyond our campus. We basically had to convince parents and those students, "You come back and our little self-contained community will be here for you. You will get your meals every day, the water is running, the electricity is on, there isn't a single speck of mildew left." We did what we had to do, and Dr. Francis likes to tell stories about getting those invoices each month. Actually we were on a weekly invoice, and it was like, "How many million dollars??" And this is at a time when we didn't know where it was all coming from, but that Word faith -- he knew we were going to be all right. And you know, we were very much all right.

You know Bill Clinton comes on campus, and I still say it was Bill Clinton who told Dr. Francis about the nation of Qatar looking for places to drop money post-Katrina, and that's the reason we have that incredible new building that was dedicated earlier this year, the Pharmacy Pavilion, because they said, "Look, we will put 12.5 million towards that, and here is another $5,000,000 to just help students for the first year or two. If they lived here or were impacted by the storm, we want to help them stay in school. That was one source. Then you had corporations contacting us the very first week saying, "We're going to send a million dollars to you because we want you to be able to lock your faculty members in, and if your finances are shaky, you can't do that, so use

this specifically for faculty retention."

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: And that's how we were able to say, even if you are teaching at Howard right now, you're still under our employment, and you will come back and teach for us starting January through August. That's what we did. So in effect, they had their time off during the recovery period, and in January, they didn't just work January to May, they worked all the way through to August when we finally had done enough for our seniors to graduate.

Erica Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: So we still had a class of 2005 graduation where Barak spoke. It just so happened that it happened in December, because our call. Because we couldn't do everything for the seniors to complete in May, but we made damn sure they still got out. And even that year, we still had more med students going to med school than anybody else.

Erica Taylor: Interesting.

Mr. Warren Bell: This is not for publication, but this is probably the first year I will have to deal with the fact that we are not. And that's because the year right after Katrina, there were only 400 brand new freshmen, and that has haunted us now for four years because it will be an extremely small graduating class. The numbers will inevitably be, we won't have enough to still have enough to beat the other schools that were even close to us.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay.

Mr. Warren Bell: I think for 2010, we have only had 37 acceptances. Now look, that's still pretty good, but for us, that's -- why that's disgraceful! We are used to 60, 70, 80 students EVERY year going to med school.

Erica Taylor: It's all relative. That's amazing.

Mr. Warren Bell: You know, I will have to do, I have already, instead of being THE #1, over a 20 year period, I know I'm still very comfortable with those claims, for the next 10 years we will still say we are a top producer of pre-med etc. I will figure it out eventually.

Erica Taylor: I can tell that.

Mr. Warren Bell: I can't say enough about how media has been with us.

Erica Taylor: Well, thank you.

Mr. Warren Bell: If anything, it's the darnedest thing. The only times we ever have a sense of not getting our fair coverage or whatever is probably more on the local level than anywhere, and unfortunately I think that may have something to do with the unfortunate persistent problem

of race here, and racial attitudes. There are still people in this community I think who think this is an all-black institution that probably doesn't even need to exist anymore because after all, we've got integration, it's a post-racial world, etc, etc, etc. And I just think that's laughable.

Certainly the network media thinks we're the cat's meow. We're very comfortable with that, and in general media here, but sometimes I think it's the public that doesn't understand just how diverse and how important we are to the bigger community. And maybe some individual media folks don't always respond as we'd like them to to news releases. But you know something? You've worked in PR. Whether you're white or black, and you're in the PR business, I don't know anyone who felt they got everything they should have gotten. If you get every single news release covered by every media, you're probably bribing them, just because of the realities of the business these days, so in general, I can't complain about how we have been received by others. As HBCUs go, I think we rock. We have had a really wonderful experience in terms of media's perceptions of us, possibly because we are not a very typical HBCU. And I don't mean just the fact that we're historically Catholic in addition to being historically black, but we have been more diverse probability than most from Day 1. Having all those sisters involved in creating the place had some impact on that, but our president has always been someone who has navigated through effortlessly through the mainstream community as he has through the African American community.

In fact, sometimes I have jokingly said, you know, Caucasians worship our president than our black citizens. I mean, you know, he is really well-respected and loved. And those things help also because an institution is not necessarily embodied in its president, but boy, when the president has a golden reputation, and he is the embodiment of that institution, it's a win/win, it seems to me.

Erica Taylor: Right.

Mr. Warren Bell: Now it causes people to pause for concern, realizing that our president has been at the job now for 42 years, and that he is turning 80 years old. But he shows absolutely no signs of worrying about that, and he is here every day.

Erica Taylor: Right, there you go! I know Dr. Harvey at Hampton, he said, pushing 33 here, so...

Mr. Warren Bell: You know how it goes. These guys are determined, and they don't have another agenda, so they are going to literally live and die on the job, serving who they have served forever. In my president's case, he came here at age 18, and other than two years in the Army, he has always been here.

Erica Taylor: Wow.

Mr. Warren Bell: Even in law school, the sisters gave him a job in a dormitory room here, because he integrated Loyola Law School. They allowed him to attend, but they didn't allow him to stay in the dormitories, so the nuns said, "Well, that's okay. If you will work part-time here while you're in law school, you will still a place on campus, and so after law school, for only two

years, he left to serve in the Army. He came right back. So from '48 to 2010, other than two years in the Army, he has always either attended Xavier,or worked for Xavier.

Erica Taylor: Interesting. That's amazing.

Mr. Warren Bell: It's amazing. That's my favorite word. It's just an amazing story.

Erica Taylor: Right. Okay, I will let you go. Now you mentioned at the very beginning that you went to Yale.

Mr. Warren Bell: I'm a 1973 graduate of Yale University undergrad, and I majored in African American studies.

Erica Taylor: Okay, interesting.

Mr. Warren Bell: Yeah, there were no journalism courses or any of that. I had started doing radio in high school, and I used that to parlay jobs at local, first radio then TV in New Haven while I was there. I was married; I was at a dad at age 19. I couldn't take the student jobs on campus because those were paying minimum wage, and back then honey, minimum wage was really minimum! It was like $2.65 an hour or something, so I was lucky because I had done a little bit of radio, I landed a job at a radio station doing news, and I mean, even at 19, I had a "grown up voice" if you will. This same radio voice.

Erica Taylor: You have a very journalistic voice.

Mr. Warren Bell: But then television, the opportunity came along to switch over to television, and my junior year I wrote, and was like an evening gopher. I wrote the scripts, but I had a great news director who allowed me to talk him into letting me write stories, and ultimately I was allowed to join after as a part-timer and went out and covered stories, went out and did interviews, and wrote scripts and before I finished I was allowed to do stories on the air. So that turned into a job in Baltimore. That same director left New Haven, went to Baltimore, and then he grabbed me as soon as graduation was over to come to Baltimore, where I spent late 1973 and then part of '74, but then I came home in '74. New Orleans boys always want to come home.

And I came to work, and started out on WVUE television, but then flipped about four months later when an opening happened at WDSU, the NBC affiliate, where I was offered a chance, to not just be a reporter, but to do the weekend anchor work, and you know, we all want to be on the air, so I fell for that, and spent six years there, and did various and sundry TV assignments here in town. The ABC affiliate, the NBC affiliate, the PBS station, one of the *Tribune* stations -- I worked public affairs there for a while. And my last TV news gig was '87 through '94, and then in '94 when that contract wasn't renewed, I decided to do the free-lance stuff, and I had a radio news gig. So I stayed on-the-air and maintained that relationship with the audience at the #1 urban adult station. I was at FM 98 for six years after that, and didn't leave the news game until 2000, the end of 2000. So then I did some free-lance stuff, and ended up here like I said in '03.

I actually did some traveling and media relations consulting work for the National NRDA's

counsel. I had like a national contract. The fulfillment requirements for that were so tough, and I had a real jerk who -- when I said, well, if I'm not preparing these reports, this is a first time experience for me -- tell me, show me what you want your reports to look like, and I can easily oblige you, he said, "I don't have to do that. If it doesn't look right, I'm going to just cancel." And he severed the relationship. And I had a good run there. I got paid more money for one day's work when I did those trips than I had ever done in my life.

Erica Taylor: Well, you know, I guess everything happens for a reason.

Mr. Warren Bell: It was good while it lasted. It's another feather in the cap, so I'm good.

Erica Taylor: All right. I just wanted to make sure I had all that right when I go to write, but I think I'm done.

********End of Interview**********

Total lines excluding heading: 765

VITA

Erica Courtney Taylor is a native of St. Louis, Missouri, where she was first introduced to the field of public relations at a minority high school journalism workshop sponsored by the Greater St. Louis Association of Black Journalists. As a student at Hazelwood Central Senior High School Erica wrote for the school newspaper and served as academic editor of the yearbook. She earned a bachelor's degree in public relations from Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. She was also a Presidential Scholar and an Honors College graduate at Hampton University. She earned a master's degree in English with a concentration in professional writing from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. While in Virginia, Erica acquired several years of work experience in the public relations industry in the educational, non-profit, and governmental sectors. She worked for the Virginia Zoological Society, Hampton University, and the City of Norfolk and she has completed several public relations-related internships.

Upon relocation to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Erica began working as a corporate communications writer at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana where she was able to assist the organization in navigating the landmark healthcare legislative changes led by the President Barack Obama administration. As a doctoral student at Louisiana State University Erica has taught and assisted in teaching four semesters of undergraduate public relations courses including public relations writing, public relations case studies, and public relations campaigns.

Erica has accepted a full-time, tenure-track, faculty position in the Mass Communications and Journalism department at Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia. In this role she will teach a variety of public relations, advertising, and journalism courses on the undergraduate and

graduate levels. She will also serve as the faculty advisor to the Norfolk State University chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America.