

BULLETIN

HUMAN RESOURCES INSTITUTE THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES



Black
Studies
Center

FALL 1973

Black Orientation

Warm Welcome For Newcomers To Claremont

Black Freshmen and transfer students arriving at the Claremont Colleges this year were given a specialized orientation sponsored by the Black Studies Center.

The 69 freshmen and 10 transfer students were greeted at an open house on September 22, and later provided with an academic testing session to determine reading and writing skills so that, according to orientation coordinator Shalimar Anderson, "we could get an idea of their abilities to determine what their strengths and weaknesses were so that we could advise them on courses and other things." Tutorial help was provided for those who needed it.

Other activities of the Black Orientation Week included academic counseling at the Black Studies Center, departmental open house for meetings between students and faculty, the opening of the Third World Film Festival, a dinner at McConnell Hall and a social hour at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Louie Robinson.

While each of the Claremont Colleges offers a freshmen orientation program, the Black Orientation Week program was designed by Pomona senior Anderson and 20 committee members to: 1) expose black students to black faculty on campus; 2) to build attitudes of unity and confidence, and 3) "to let them know that we were here to help."

Reviewing the week, Miss Anderson declared: "I really think the program is something that should continue to be done in the future. It's necessary, very necessary."

Black Studies Courses Present Wide Variety



Crouch



Dalizu



Morant



Dwyer



Gavin



Houchins

James Garrett is New BSC Director

After a year-long search and 60 applications, the Claremont Colleges' Black Studies Center has a new director. He is James Garrett, former program director for the Center for Black Education in Washington, D.C. His view of his new job are presented inside this issue.



Garrett

Twenty-one courses are being offered students of the Claremont Colleges this semester through the Black Studies Center.

The courses range through the fields of communications, economics, education, English, history, humanities, language, political science, psychology and sociology.

The largest selection of classes is available in English, history, language, and political science, with each field offering three courses.

In English the classes are: *The Hunt*, taught by Stanley Crouch; *Expository Writing, Critical Reading and Basic Research*, taught by Sue Houchins, and *Introduction to Black American Literature*, taught by Agnes Jackson.

In the field of history, a *Survey of Black History to 1865, Slavery in the Americas*, and *Special Studies: Seminar on Black Oral History*, is taught by Alonzo Smith, while *Tropical Africa* is offered by John Dwyer.

The language courses include *Introductory Swahili* and *Intermediate Swahili*, taught by Stephen Mutunga, and *Introductory French* and *Intermediate French* taught by Odette Meyers.

Political science offerings are: *Politics of the Black World*, taught by Egambi Dalizu, *Comparative Political Theories and Social Change*, taught by Assefa Medhane, and *Pan Africanism*, taught by Medhane and Alonzo Smith.

Other courses include: the psychology class *Race Consciousness and Personality Development*, taught by John Morant; the sociology class *Race and Ethnic Relations*, taught by Clabe Hangan; the education class *The Death Machine: A Study in Public Education*, taught by Elizabeth Gavin; the humanities *Black Theatre Workshop*, conducted by Stanley Crouch; the

(Continued on Page 4)

New Man at the Helm with New Goals; James Garrett Charts BSC Course

The Black Studies Center of the Claremont Colleges has begun its fifth year of operation under the leadership of a new director, James Garrett, who one newspaper has already described as "not your ordinary academic type."

To be sure, the new director's academic credentials are in good order: an honor graduate of San Francisco State College where he majored in English; a master's taken at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, and work completed for his Ph.D. at Union Graduate School in Ohio.

But Brother Garrett — as he prefers to be called — has come to Claremont with a fresh approach to the relevance of black studies, and a totally pragmatic view of the political nuances resulting from the resignation under fire of the BSC's first director, Dr. Donald K. Cheek, in 1972, and a resulting year in which the center was headed by Acting Director Egambali Dalizu.

He is a young man, thirty, wiry and energetic, who has been on the battlefronts: a field secretary for SNCC in Mississippi and Los Angeles for two years; a veteran of the freedom rides into the bitter South; a worker and planner in black causes both on cam-

Garrett explains that "this means that the BSC and black students on

this campus have to define themselves in terms of those interests, whatever the best interests of the black community are. That means, of course, that there will be community involvement, probably very concrete, very specific, tight-knit kinds of things, and on the campus an intensification of building an atmosphere so that wherever black students go, there is a potential for them to relate to something that has to do with black consciousness. I think those things were moved away from over the past couple of years."

The new BSC director describes the current process as going "back to the ABC's: I am black; these are what my interests are; this is how I need to learn to serve my people; this is what I need to grade because that's part of the struggle; I need to relate in some ways to the community that is nearby the campus because it helps me. I need to travel because that helps prepare me. There are 10 or 15 or 20 very specific things that students could do in terms of their preparation for serving the black community. We'd like to focus on whatever those things are."

The changes that have taken place in college black studies programs, as Brother Garrett sees them, are that "six or seven years ago, when they were first getting started, we were trying to prepare people to be both racially conscious and to serve the white community. Essentially, they were being prepared to go out and become productive members of American society. But I think that over those six or seven years we have learned that that kind of racial consciousness isn't strong enough; that you have to move to a point where in fact you define yourself in terms of the community from which you came, the community which spawned you. That's one level of reality.

"A second is, yes, we feel that there is no career that is more useful than serving your own people.

"A third is, there are no fields of endeavor that cannot be adapted to use black people. So there is no way, finally, to not be a part of the black struggle, because you carry it with you wherever you go." (Continued next page)

"Black Students Must Define Selves In Terms of Community Interests"

He hastens to add that this approach "doesn't mean that directly at all points you serve the black community, but it means that you try to find ways and to use your academic and technical facility to augment and develop the black community. All of us can find ways to do that. It doesn't matter whether it's journalism or medicine, electronics, engineering or chemistry or social sciences. There are ways to pinpoint and relate yourself directly to the needs and aspirations of our people. It can be done."

One of the first things that the new BSC director has done is to propose a reorganization of the curriculum, adding some courses, dropping others, making changes in some of those which exist. While his proposal allows for students who want to seek a black studies major, Garratt declares: "The kind of curriculum that I am talking about here says that whatever you learn you can use for the benefit of black people. It does give a thorough grounding. But it also, at the third and fourth years, says, 'If I am in medicine, I can join with other blacks who are in medicine to begin to work out, at least theoretically and in some cases practically, the problems black people face in medicine. If I am in economics, I can begin to work with the economic problems of black people who live in so-called underdeveloped countries — countries which were underdeveloped by Europe. If I am going into drama, I can find ways to develop a black theater or to set up a program of theater arts for black children. I can find ways to apply very concretely the skills that I am getting in this setting towards the benefit of black people.' So everything becomes a black studies major in some sense."

Garrett does not believe, however, that the ethnic makeup of the Claremont Colleges is supportive of an official black studies major at this time. He proposes to use this first year to "re-create the atmosphere where it's all right to be black," utilizing film programs, entertainment and prominent speakers dealing with economic and political issues affecting blacks. The second-year plan calls for students producing their own films, speakers

and entertainment to take to the community.

"So what we do first," the director explains, "is re-create ourselves here and try to take that and adapt it and move it back to our people so that there is a constant fusion. I think, also, that over the next two years there should be a real intensification of making more excellent the academic program. There is a notion by some students that some of the courses are throw-in courses; that they are not only boring because of the style of the instructor, but they are also superficial because of the information that's put out.

"Now I'm sure that's also true of about 50 to 60 percent of white studies on this campus. But my view is to make 100 percent substantive educational activity for black students on this campus so that they know nothing black that isn't qualitative, that doesn't say: 'you have to work extra-hard because that's what struggle is about. If we're going to develop our people, you have to work extra-hard, struggle extra-hard, commit yourself extra-hard,' and that the classes that students take don't have any slack, that the faculty works to say, 'Yes, I'll go out of my way to aid you in this, or

that, but you can't be lazy. I'm not going to be lazy and you're not going to be lazy.' That's something I'm really going to push."

Garrett feels that the work done by elementary and high schools in preparing students with basic skills still lags somewhat behind the qualitative level of the colleges, and thus provides a further challenge.

Born in Dallas, Texas, Garrett moved to Los Angeles at the age of 13. A disagreement with a teacher got him sent to the Avalon Community Center. "That was one step from going to the California Youth Authority," he explains.

At the Avalon Center, Garrett, then 16, began working with children, an act which was to influence the direction of his life. "The children got me into this in the first place," he often says. "I mean, eight-, nine- and ten-year olds. The more I worked with children, the more I found that somebody had to work to create the circumstances where they didn't have to go through the kind of stuff I was going through, that my parents went through."

Garrett also remembers something that James Baldwin wrote, although the young youth center worker did not (Continued on Page 4)



Special Services Aid Students With Campus Problems

Two special services are available to black students on the Claremont campus throughout the year, one operating within the Black Studies Center and the other working in conjunction with it. They are the Counseling Division of the BSC and the Black Admissions Office.

The Counseling Division is established to serve black students at each of the Claremont Colleges. The dean of counseling, Audrey Hindman, and her assistant, Joe Bailey, work in close connection with the administrative staffs of the colleges in terms of decision- and policy-making. Thus academic, personal, social and other black student problems and concerns are handled through the BSC's Counseling Division.

Explains Dean Hindman: "The administrative staffs of the colleges often seek assistance and guidance from the BSC in their relationships with students, it is therefore important for students to make use of the resources of the center. Regarding any problem, the student should call extension 3669."

While the Black Admissions Office functions primarily in admitting students to the Claremont Colleges, it also offers a limited number of jobs to students and tries to maintain some contact with those admitted. "We have an admissions committee with student members, and if they desire something for us to do, we talk it over and see if we can do it," explains Jackson Taylor, assistant to Black Admissions Officer Eileen Wilson.

The office sponsors a Black Admissions Day at the beginning of the school year, and this term admitted some 68 students.

In addition to those services performed by the Black Admissions Office and the BSC Counseling Division are the day-to-day activities of the Black Studies Center where academic curriculum, special programs, jobs and other matters relating to students are handled.

The Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Black Students Cont'd. . . . (Continued from Page 3)

read it until a few years later: "He said, 'Children are helpless, and we must at any cost be responsible for them. For we are their models and they are our hope.' That's the way I look at it. Somebody has got to operate as a constant model. That's the reason that I consciously try to maintain my principles, to keep my integrity, to not sell out to money or status. I keep struggling with that mainly because children have a habit of being brutally honest with people, of saying things that leave you bare."

Program director of the Center for Black Education in Washington, D.C., for the past four years, a one-time Economic Opportunity Agency staffer, a member of the organizing committee for the Sixth Pan African Congress at Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, author of books and plays, Garrett admits to having been only a so-so college student until he got involved in the freedom rides of the early sixties. "After that, when I came back to school, I was screaming because I knew how I was going to spend the rest of my life. I had seen some terrible things happen down there in the South. I had a set of objectives. So when I came back to East Los Angeles College and UCLA, I was screaming. There was no way to deal with me then, because I had the sense that I would like to help students.

"I was going to win. There was victory out there and I was going to participate in that victory, so you couldn't beat me. I had decided that there were only two things that I needed, information and confidence, because I had the objectives. The schools provided the information, and I had the confidence. Once I got the information, I was gone. I'm still getting information."



Jackson



Mbuya



Medhane



Meyers



Mutunga



Robinson

Courses Cont'd. . . . (Continued from Page 1)

communications class *Blacks and the Communications Media*, taught by Louie Robinson and the economics classes *Economic Problems of the Third World* and *Economics of Underdevelopment: The Ghetto*, taught by Zachary Mbuya.

New courses may be added next semester.



Smith

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