

100 years white, only 9 black

By MARGARET DOWNING
News Editor

With all the talk about anniversaries and new beginnings, some notice should be taken of another group here which has a birthday coming up Jan. 23. On that day it will be nine years since the University dropped all racial barriers and allowed blacks to register officially in "TCU proper."

There had been blacks connected with the school before this through extension courses operating some distance away.

Elizabeth Proffer, University Programs and Services director, said education classes were held at the Gay Street School in Fort Worth. This was a black school whose students received credit at TCU.

The Evening College during the early '50s taught some extension courses at Carswell Air Force Base. Whoever the government sent to the courses received instruction regardless of race.

Brite Divinity First

In the integration process, Brite Divinity School led the way by being the first part of the University to allow blacks to come to the University and in fighting for integration on all parts of the campus.

The Skiff from Friday, Sept. 19, 1952, had a front page article which said trustees of Brite had voted unanimously "to admit Negro students to graduate work in the seminary," however, "by last Friday, no Negro students had pre-registered for this fall."

In the Friday, Oct. 3, 1952 issue of the Skiff, was a story reporting the results of an integration poll.

Three out of four students said they would favor integration of the undergraduate school. One-half of teachers polled gave non-committal answers.

Some students, personally in favor of integration, said they were afraid it would not be fair to admit blacks to the school and then not allow them to take part in general school affairs and the Southwest Conference (SWC).

Unfortunately, when full scale integration finally did come about more than ten years later, this prediction proved all too true.

Adequate Education

A senior girl from Houston said as long as the Christian Church provided adequate education at Jarvis College, it was not necessary for Negroes to attend the undergraduate program at the University.

Jarvis Christian College was, and is, an essentially black school connected with the Christian Church and, thereby, in some manner to the University. TCU professors taught courses there while still teaching here.

In April of 1962, the Executive Committee of the University's Board of Trustees approved requests from Brite and Harris School of Nursing that all students in those programs be permitted to remove undergraduate deficiencies in the University proper.

This meant students could be accepted who had graduated from another school, but who may not have satisfied the undergraduate requirements of Brite and Harris. These students could go to the undergraduate school and cover what they had missed.

Black students were allowed to enter Harris after they had



HURDLES THE GAP—Ronnie Hurdle became the University's first black cheerleader, in 1969, upsetting older friends of TCU. Dr. Moudy and cheerleaders had hurried conferences over compromises.

successfully completed two years of college or nursing school.

Integration Goal

Dr. Paul Wassenich, religion professor, said before the 1954 court order the school had quietly allowed some blacks to attend courses in sociology and education on campus.

In 1963-64, Mark Wassenich, then president of the student body, set out to make his goal in office the integration of the University, Dr. Wassenich said.

Mark Wassenich worked with Dr. M.E. Sadler, then chancellor, and faculty before taking the request to the Board of Trustees.

On Jan. 23, 1964, the Board said no admissions would be barred on the basis of race, creed or

nationality, from that date forward.

The decision made during the Christmas holidays, was reported in the Skiff after vacation. The Tuesday, Feb. 4, 1964, Skiff said, "Trustees Drop Racial Barriers—Campus Remains Calm With Total Integration."

Among other things the article reassured readers "there were no incidents of the type that have marred other institutions and brought shame to their locales," after the news was announced.

As far as sports in the SWC, blacks had to wait a while. Jim

Garner, Sports Information director, said at that time there was no set policy in the SWC against admitting blacks; it was just "nobody had the guts to go out and sign one."

TCU had the first SWC black basketball player with James Cash in 1966, Garner said.

Ronnie Hurdle was the first black cheerleader in 1969 who sparked a lot of discussion mainly from "long-time supporters of TCU" about whether he was allowed to touch a white female cheerleader. After a year, the University decided it would be all right.

Woody Austin was the first black to belong to the band fraternity. Jennifer Giddings was the first black homecoming queen in 1970.

There has never been any outright violence over race at the University. This started with the original University-wide integration about which Dr. Wassenich said, "Everything went smoothly, but to keep it so there was a lot of work done behind the scenes."

Next week: Black and white recollections and feelings.

BERRY STREET SUPER LAUNDROMAT

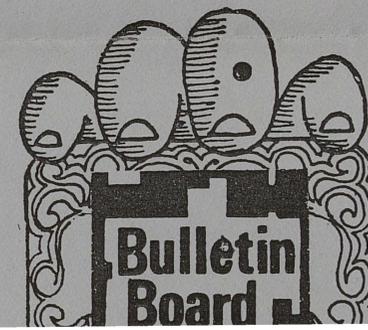
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