WE TOO HAVE A HISTORY: AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY 1967-1982

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DISSERTATION
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ABSTRACT

Eastern Illinois University, located in Charleston, Illinois is one of the original higher education institutions in Southern Illinois. Beginning as a normal school to train teachers, its mission soon expanded. In 1895, this institution became home to many Illinois residents, near and far. Noted as a teacher training institution with a predominantly white population, in 1967 only 35 Black students were enrolled. However, in just six years that number would increase twelve times the original number to 425.

This project attempts to capture students’ experiences during that rapid growth. Similar to college campuses across the nation tenacious students and passionate faculty drove racial change at Eastern. I interviewed 13 participants¹, 2 of whom served as professors at some point during 1967-1982, and the others were students. The primary research question I explored is: What were the experiences of African American students at Eastern Illinois University during 1967-1982? Ultimately, this story displayed the resilience students possessed during the 1967-75 period and though confronted with a few instances of resistance, the early period of the 80s proved to be a bit less eventful which was indicative of the neo-conservatism movement, which was reflective across the nation.

Similar research has traditionally focused on larger, research-intensive institutions. However, this research impacts the body of knowledge as it explores the experiences of Black students at smaller, regional, teaching institutions. Typically the kind of students that are profiled to attend these institutions typically did not exemplify a level of activism likened to those seen of tier one, larger institutions. Contrarily, this

¹ The 13th participant was John Holmes, an alumna of Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
research presents a distinct picture of character, persistence and triumph as students work diligently to change campus life forever with the assistance of key campus figures.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the countless individuals who helped pave the way for my existence into a realm of higher education, those individual alumni of Eastern Illinois University who were instrumental in fighting until change was evident…and to future Black alums, we, too have a history in which to be proud.

To participants in this project, thank you will never suffice. But I am forever grateful for your kindness of sharing your homes (for some), hearts and memories: Dr. Bill T Ridgeway, Dr. Jimmie Lewis Franklin, Elmer Pullen, Marvinetta Woodley Penn, Yvette Jackson Moyo, Edgar Matthews, Cecilia Brinker, Dr. Mona Davenport, Almetris Snalligan-Stanley, Dr. Kelvin Lane, Dr. Nathaniel Anderson, Clifton Graham Jr. and John Holmes.

To the late Liz Halbert, thanks for being an example of activism during my tenure at Eastern. The mark you left there is longstanding.

To my Mom, Robin Cain and to my Dad, Nelson Louis (in heaven)-Thank you for instilling a level of determination in me that would not allow me to quit. Mom thanks so much teaching me to sacrifice, to care and to give. These traits have helped me in this process and in life generally. You are a continue guide in which we all follow!

This work is also dedicated to my two children-Kyler Louis and Jaylon Louise. There were many days and nights your four and six your old minds did not fully comprehend why the computer remained my constant companion. I want you to know those countless nights persisted with you in mind. I hope through completing this work, I will now be able to focus on other things that will help me to build a better future and world for you to live and thrive. I love you endlessly. Please know because Mommy has completed this task (as Daddy will too) you now have great shoes to fill, a legacy in which to build. You can do it!
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To my rest of my dissertation committee-Dr. Helen Neville and Dr. Lorenzo Baber. Thanks so much for trusting and believing in this work. Dr. Neville thanks for being instrumental in the field and offering your countless works on race and the experience thereof. Thanks for being an example of a woman of color that is making her mark in the academy, as well as the community. Dr. Baber, you path clearly shows the possibilities of committed researchers. Many are watching and taking notes, myself included. To the both of you, your involvement in my process has been ever so timely. Thank you so much.
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To my family, near and far, thank you for believing it was possible, especially on the days I did not. It’s been a long, long journey WE made it!

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To my husband, Matthew Lee Nesbitt, WOW! On the days that I was lazy or just plain procrastinated, thanks for always providing an example of what happens when you actually follow through. Thanks for all the talks, prayers, and speeches that reminded me of my purpose in this process. Thank you for being an example of commitment! Thanks also, even in the midst of your hectic schedule, for always ensuring that the house was kept, our children were safe and that I never missed a meal. I’m thoroughly convinced; I have the greatest husband the ever walked the earth! I love you something serious!

To those that will desire to pursue a Ph.D. or ones that have started on this track, please know the end though not always viewable is very possible! Never compare or let anyone else compare your journey with your neighbors. There are lessons you will learn along the way that are separate from anyone or anything else. Learn them,
without divergence. Also, if you remain undistracted in knowing that there is purpose in each step of the process, your ultimate product will provide you with the necessary precision for you to prevail. Keep at it! Want it more than anything else! Though there will be many desires to detour, don’t. Even if you never once work in the field in which you are endeavoring, finish the degree at the very least to give yourself the gift of finally realizing, that nothing is impossible.

To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, where would I begin? I would have never once guessed I would attend college, let alone conduct dissertation research on that exact same place. You are indeed thee Great Orchestrator! Thank your for showing your glory in the completion of this project. Thank you for showing me what true discipline looks and feels like. It hurts! Thanks for often reminds the words of Paul’s, your strength has indeed been perfected in my weakness.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION
My Experience at Eastern Illinois University

As an Eastern Illinois University alumna, garnering information about the experiences of former students proved to be a very rewarding process for me. I began attending Eastern in the fall of 1997. However, a few months prior I was invited to visit the campus along with other Black students for pre-orientation activities. Johnetta Jones alongside other staff from the Office of Minority Student Affairs spearheaded the orientation events. As the Director of Minority Student Affairs she emitted the essence of a motherly figure, positioned to ensure that we were cognizant of our responsibility to maintain respectable academic and social reputations while on campus. Though forthright, her charismatic approach was appealing. During that time I would be introduced to other soon-to-be freshman students with whom I would develop lifelong friendships, while learning about the endless possibilities of collegiate life.

I was excited, eager even as the program was ending and I prepared to return back to life as a high school student. Although an adolescent, I understood the power of evidence; I needed something to let my peers know (though I could barely pronounce it) that I would soon be matriculating and was preparing for the next stage of my life—college. Just before our bus pulled off, I hurried into the campus bookstore and purchased a royal blue lightweight pullover jacket with ‘E.I.U’ stitched on the front bottom panel. Wanting to take complete ownership of the garment, and etch my place within the Eastern experience, I had my first name embroidered on the right chest. I returned to Chicago, looking forward to the senior activities of prom, luncheon, and graduation ready to complete my high school experience. My outlook of the future was new and fresh, and in my mind life was good.
August came and met me with great anticipation. My parents and I packed the car and headed to Charleston, Illinois. As we pulled into the parking lot of Lawson Hall Dormitory, things appeared a lot different from my initial trip. Where were the other Black students from the orientation? Where was Ms. Jones?

Somehow I thought that maybe I was just the first to arrive and the others would eventually show, but they never did, at least not to my dormitory, or to any of my classes. As I watched my parents’ car taillights exit the parking lot, I knew then that things would be much different than the pre-orientation life I had envisioned. At that moment I had an epiphany; adjusting to living life independent of my family and friends, familiar teachers and coaches, and from those that supported me would be drastically different. I would now be solely responsible for me. As I began settling into my new environment, somehow I still had the hope of finding the group from spring orientation. Eventually I would occasionally see some of those individuals around campus, but that communal feeling that was aroused during the prior spring activities were rarely recreated. Entrusted with the responsibility of navigating the foreign terrain of campus life, where unwelcoming faces were the norm and racial undertones existed, I would adapt to the culture of Eastern.

The culture was simple. Routinely, at the beginning of each school year student passersby would give a friendly wave to one another, regardless of race or ethnicity. However, by the second month, things slowly shifted. By this time the white students who were fresh to campus had gained knowledge about the unwritten code of separation. It was as if the white students were told, “Do not speak or interact with them (Blacks)!“ After the presumed indoctrination of the new students to campus politics, many would avoid small conversation and even eye contact. I adjusted accordingly.
Amid the sea of white faces, transitioning from the metropolitan city of Chicago to the remote town of Charleston as a first generation college student was difficult. As a 17 year-old, I often felt relegated to the peripheries created and maintained by the mainstream. My cultural norms of relaxed language and being around those that shared familiar experiences were completely interrupted. Immediately, this new issue of race would become a prevalent factor in my daily life. As the only Black student in ninety-nine percent of my classes over my four-year tenure at Eastern, I recall the psychological routines and self-talks I practiced regularly in hopes of properly “representing the race.” These routines became my norm.

By the time I became a graduate student, I often reflected on my “raced” experience at Eastern. I became curious about the experiences of those African Americans who had previously matriculated through Eastern. Were their experiences similar to my own? Where did they come from? Why did they come? Did they stay, if so why? If they left, why did they leave? What was their journey, what was their story?

As I started the preliminary research for this topic I perused archival files of the Daily Eastern News, the campus student produced newspaper. The bulk of the information I obtained regarding the initial impact of diversifying the campus and the struggles that persisted were during 1967 to 1982. Focusing on this 15-year period allowed me to garner an in-depth perspective of challenges, experiences, and triumphs within the realm of racial dynamics. The oral narratives, coupled with traditional archival data-newspaper articles, meeting minutes, presidential correspondence, and yearbooks, offered a perspective of African American history yet to be explored and published regarding this and this type of institution.
Rationale for the Study

While the investigation of Blacks at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) is not one of innovation this study is significant because it will further contribute to the body of literature regarding smaller universities like Eastern. Eastern is a comprehensive, 4-year primarily teaching (non-research intensive) institution. Nationally, smaller institutions are only recently being added to the literature and educational discussion. Regionally, schools like Eastern, situated in the shadows of major institutions and communities are often times overlooked. However, gaining the perspective of the students of color in smaller, public, non-research intensive institutions could potentially shift the course of administrative polices regarding issues in higher education, establish new national policy initiatives, and ultimately provide a positive impact on the experiences of future students for generations to come.

This dissertation captures the ways in which these pioneering students at Eastern negotiated race, space, and identity within the context of a predominantly white rural town. This project is partially an oral history project because the major questions investigated were answered through discussion with alumni and staff who were instrumental in the events that took place at Eastern Illinois University during the 1967-1982 period. I conducted twelve interviews, ten of which were from students who


3 I conducted twelve interviews pertaining to Eastern and an additional interview regarding Southern Illinois University Carbondale, a total of 13 interviews.
attended Eastern during the aforementioned time frame. The other interviews were
done with two former professors at Eastern. Their comprehensive knowledge of the
institutions, coupled with insightful wisdom, was a critical element that equipped me
with the capacity to contextualize this study.

Overall, this study is significant also because it ultimately highlights the
successes of the Black students in a racially hostile climate. EIU students and faculty
were successful in many endeavors, including the naming of the University Union, the
development of the Black house, and the development of an Afro-American Studies
degree program, among many other accomplishments. This study is also significant in
that it highlights the presence of a white University president, Quincy Doudna, who
possessed an open minded approach at a time in history where many whites were not
in solidarity with the cause and plight of Black students.
Blacks at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)

Racism is a foundation of American society and has in turn affected major institutions like colleges and universities. Though sporadic, as early as the 18th century Blacks were introduced to higher education systems within the U.S. Through abolitionist efforts, several were allowed to attend universities and colleges throughout the U.S. However, over the first 230 years of higher education only 15-28 Black students graduated. With the inception of the Morrill Acts of 1890 (1862) the establishment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) increased the numbers of Blacks who were able to receive college education.

Still, with the inception of HBCUs disparities were evident. Among the HBCUs and PWIs things were separate and very unequal. Issues concerning inadequate staff and deplorable facilities were always seemingly at the fore. This forced many Black students to desire more, to desire different. Yet many scholars discussed whether the training of Blacks should be in the hands of whites. Writing in the 1930s Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson speaks to this issue in a very eloquent way:

The thought of the inferiority of the Negro is drilled into him in almost every class he enters and in almost every book he studies. ...Much of what [universities] have taught as economics, history, literature, religion, and philosophy is propaganda... that involved a waster of time and misdirected the Negroes thus trained...When a Negro has finished his education in our schools, then, he has been equipped to being the life of an Americanized or Europeanized white man...The education of the Negroes then, the most important thing in the uplift of Negroes, is almost entirely in the hands of those who have enslaved them...The present system under the control of whites trains the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of his becoming white.  

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4 For example: 1799 in 1824 at Dartmouth in New Hampshire, the pro-slavery state of Kentucky allowed for Blacks to attend Berea. In 1835, Oberlin College in Ohio... 1854 Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, 1856 Wilberforce University in Ohio also allowed Blacks to swarm their schools.  
Mary Beth Gasman, an educational historian noted for her work on African Americans and HBCUs, in her 2008 text *Triumphs, Troubles and Taboos*, speaks to the historical quandary outlined here by Woodson that necessitated the relevance and prevalence of Black institutions. Gasman reports that more than 150 years the HBCUs have trained a plethora of leadership within the Black community. They are credited to have trained and graduated many of the world’s leaders in education, medicine, law and science.  

While there are these great institutions that are and have directly impacted communities of colors, many Black students desired to receive degrees at PWIs.

Dr. W.E. B. DuBois in 1910 conducted a study where he hoped to establish an official record of the success of Blacks who attended such institutions. He captured the ideas of many faculty and students as Blacks matriculated at PWIs. He wrote letters to admission offices in order to gather information regarding the success of the Blacks at their institutions. Several schools responded, some painstakingly honest. Yale stated:

> The success of these [Negro] graduates has varied considerably. Many of them, such as -- '04, -- '03 Law, - '96, have made most creditable records in every way. Yale University has never tried to attract Negro students and, on the other hand, has never felt justified in refusing admittance to those who became qualified to enter.

While never interested in, or concerned about “attracting” the Negro student, it was nevertheless open to receiving those that were able to enter that possessed the proper qualifications. This cavalier but forthright expression, as we will witness seemed to be very in tune with the times. In Pennsylvania, St. Vincent College revealed:

> I cannot tell what the attitude of the student body should be towards Negroes, but we shall not risk a trial of it. Applications are very rare-one during the last four years. We do

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9 Ibid. 23.
not think it wise here under the prevailing conditions to accept any distinctively colored students into the college.\textsuperscript{10}

St. Vincent, not willing to 'risk' what the cause of the 'distinctively' colored person would do to their ranks and was no interested in testing the waters. However, in Indiana at Hanover its college replied with a more subtle response, "For \textit{obvious} reasons we have no colored students in Hanover College."\textsuperscript{11} This one-liner, which spoke volumes, never makes mention of plans to change to their status quo. Just down the road in the pro-slavery state of Missouri, their sentiment was just as blatant. One school stated, "Never a Negro graduate nor a student. Couldn't do it in Missouri if we wanted to."\textsuperscript{12} Authorities at Missouri Valley College in Marshall, MO were equally as adamant. They suggested: "We have never had any graduates of Negro descent and are not likely to ever have." Still as Carleton College in Farmington their school reported, "We have never had any Negro or any person with Negro blood graduate from Carleton College in its history. I have not found a student in the state that would tolerate a Negro in the college. And it is even worse since the Johnson-Jeffries fight."\textsuperscript{13} Some on the East Coast seemed to a bit more welcoming. At Thiel College in Greenville, PA their office stated: "Should any [Negroes] apply for admission they would be welcome."\textsuperscript{14}

On a more positive note, we can see some schools and states were more receptive of the African people. With Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana there was some reticence yet a measure of inclusion. The reporting authorities stated the following:

So far as I know Negro students here are treated with respect by the student body. We never have many of them and they are not thrown closely with the other students in a

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid. 24.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{The Ogden Standard}. July 4, 1910. \textit{Johnson Wins World’s Championship In the 15h Round}. 40\textsuperscript{th} year No. 159. With many riots and some celebrations, Jack Johnson on July 4, 1910 became the first Black Heavyweight Champion of the world. He held the title for 5 years. He fought James Jeffries in the July 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1910 fight. Authorities at Carleton speak to the heighten level of racial disdain that was prevalent after Jackson defeats James Jeffries, a white boxer.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
social way, but all students are measured by their work whether they are white or colored.\footnote{Ibid. 25.}

Oskaloosa College in Iowa said, “We have had at various times Negro students who have made excellent records in their class-room work.”\footnote{Ibid.} In Upsala College in Kenilworth, New Jersey, their officials report similar news, "We have had some Negro students and they have been treated with same respect as other students."\footnote{Ibid.} The final response I will include from DuBois’ work is that of Oregon Agricultural College located in Corvallis, Oregon:

There were two Negro students registered during the past year and I understand they have been making very good records. One of the young men in question is very active in certain student enterprises, particularly the Cosmopolitan Club, and is popular with the students generally. The attitude of the student body of the Oregon Agricultural College towards colored students, so far as the writer’s observation and experiences are concerned, has been very friendly.\footnote{Ibid. 26.}

Overall, whether the responses were candidly honest or politically correct for the nature and time reported, they were very telling in regards to the dichotomous nature that was present in regards to the race relations and education. In many ways there existed no middle ground. Though discriminatory practices were in place and segregation was apparent, Blacks were admitted to the school yet not actively sought out to gain entry in these predominantly white institutions.

By the middle of the twentieth century the ruling of \textit{Plessy v. Ferguson} which allowed for the separate but public facilities, was up for intense debate with the 1939\textit{ Missouri ex. Rel. Gaines v. Canada} case. In \textit{Gaines}, a Black student named Lloyd Gaines was refused admission to University of Missouri’s Law school.\footnote{Missouri ex. rel Gaines v. Canada, 305 U.S. 337 (1938)} The courts offered to pay his admissions to another law school outside the state, but this further violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14\textsuperscript{th} amendment. The law finally upheld Gaines’
admissions stating because there was only a single law school in the state, all qualified persons regardless of color or race would have an opportunity to attend. Though Lloyd never attended, this ruling paved the road for future cases. In 1950, (Sweat vs. Painter) Herman Sweat was refused admission to the University of Texas Law School. Hence, a Black law school was established. However, this too challenged the separate but equal doctrine, as the Black law school was underfunded and staffed and therefore not “equal.” During that same time in April of 1950 McLaurin v. Oklahoma, George McLaurin was fighting a similar case. McLaurin hoped to further his education, in pursuit of a Ph.D. in Education at the University of Oklahoma but was denied admissions. McLaurin agreed that his rights under the Equal Protection Clause had been violated. The courts agreed to admit McLaurin to the University of Oklahoma, however he would be isolated from the other students in the cafeteria and classroom activities.

In 1964 President Lyndon Baines Johnson ordered what many consider to be the most comprehensive civil-rights act to date. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in voting, education, and the use of public facilities. Title VI of the act barred the use of federal funds for segregated programs and schools. This act declared segregation illegal and Black students were able to enroll in PWIs. In 1965 the Higher Education Act, offered financial assistance for Blacks students to attend post secondary and higher education institutions. These pieces of civil rights legislation, for the first

20 After traveling to Chicago shortly after the decision was made, Lloyd Gaines disappeared. He never reaped the benefits of his labor, however the case served as a stepping-stone to succeeding cases. One article reports that a reason for his disappearance was due to the pressure of the unwanted “fame” that came along with the case. A New York article quotes one of his last conversations with his mom where he states, “...Sometimes I wish I were just a plain, ordinary man whose name no one recognized.” David Stout, “A Supreme Triumph, Then into the Shadows.” New York Times (New York, NY), July 11, 2009.


time allowed Blacks to explore in large number other schools besides HBCUs and the sporadic institutions that allowed Blacks. Now with the hope of attending institutions that had greater funding and available resources, Blacks students by attending PWIs explored these options understanding its’ potential to change the trajectory of their lives.

While the numbers of Blacks at HBCUs remain stable for the first decade after these legislative changes, by 1974 there was a decline in the number of baccalaureate degrees awards at these institutions. At the graduate level, this decline was more evident by 1977 when there was a 25% decline in the master degrees awarded at these institutions.23

Silas Purnell, an HBCU trained pioneer would assist many students in realizing their dreams to attend, not only at HBCUs but PWIs as well. Purnell served a major role in advancing and transforming the lives of everyday, mediocre students into stellar community activists, entrepreneurs, scholars and physicians.

Educational Advancer-Mr. Silas Purnell

Born in Chicago on March 10, 1923 Purnell was a product of Chicago Public Schools. Upon graduation, he attended college and earned his baccalaureate degree in Business Administration at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He later served in the United States Air Force. As a civilian he worked for the Coca-Cola Corporation for 12 years. In 1967 he began a volunteering with Ada S. McKinley Services Inc. In this position he dedicated himself to youth and their families in hopes of building a bright

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future through college education. The students he mentored have gone on to enroll in over 200 colleges and universities throughout the country, half of those students went on to obtain graduate and professional degrees.

Aside from potential students, many of the relationships he fostered were with institutions in the state of Illinois. Many of his best contacts are at little-known, predominantly white institutions that otherwise would have had difficulties recruiting in Black high schools. Purnell was probably one of the most known people in terms of getting students in schools across the Midwest as well as those institutions across the nation. Purnell worked out of his basement in the infamous projects of Chicago. His rapport with key individuals at various colleges and universities allowed him to turn the dream of educational advancement into a reality. He would plead the cases of young people to the admissions offices and presidents and many Black students would be given a chance to advance their dream of a college life. One of my research participants, Elmer Pullen who came to Eastern in 1967 and later committed 32 years as a financial officer at Eastern, recalled the influence of Mr. Purnell:

I went to a meeting down in Atlanta and Si was down there, and he talked and talked and his point was if we can educate, then we don’t need to incarcerate and it’s much, much cheaper to educate than incarcerate. He has sent students to school (laughs out loud), sometimes without any money! Which some, some people didn’t appreciate. Si knew, once you got them in there, the university was going to figure out, some kind of way to get them some kind of money! And I thought of lot of Si, he helped a lot of students. At one time, our Vice President of Student Affairs, his name was Glenn Williams at the time if we were in need of something, he would call Si. Whether it be in Springfield or whatever. He had an excellent relationship with Si Purnell. So, I think Si has probably touched more lives in state schools in Illinois... He sent kids to Iowa, Michigan, all over the country! He did a good job with very little resources.

In 1967, while waiting on his food order at a local McDonald’s in Chicago, Mr. Silas Purnell upon seeing three counter workers, noticed a similarity about each of them,

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25 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
they each wore their high school class rings. Upon seeing this he asked, “Why aren’t you in college?” One replied, “We can’t afford it!” In an intense exchange, Purnell stated: “If you have money, would you go?” They nodded in agreement, in unison. This, “in your face” exchange marked a turning point in Mr. Purnell’s career.26

Not only did Mr. Purnell’s life begin to shift, but the young people he encountered changed for the better. After spending thirty plus years in corporate America, he spent thirty plus more, challenging aimless high school students to become stellar scholars through the vehicle of a college education.

"We’re looking for places [colleges and universities] that are willing to accommodate our kids, places that we can cut a deal with,” says Mr. Purnell. One of those friends, Johnetta Jones, Director of Minority Affairs at Eastern Illinois University, says Mr. Purnell has it right.” She states, "If he calls up and asks, 'Baby, can you take one [student] for me?' I'm going to take the kid. He doesn't send you unqualified people.”27 This conversation with Jones was not unique as Purnell impacted the live of students at Eastern and beyond.

Purnell sent many students to Eastern; Deidrus Brown-Underwood is one of them. Mr. Purnell states, “I like to work with students nobody else wants.” He goes on, “students should not be judged on solely on the basis of raw grades and test scores but also what they have endured in life.”28 Brown-Underwood met in Purnell’s Dearborn basement office. After Purnell looked over her application, he proclaimed: “You’re going to Eastern Illinois University…” While at Eastern Brown-Underwood achieved a

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3.75 grade point average and excelled well beyond the classroom. Advancing from a student possessing a mere hope, to now an earned Doctorate degree and her owning her own consulting practice, Brown-Underwood’s life epitomizes success.

Purnell was noted as one of the most straightforward and no-nonsense types. However, the level of passion he possessed was instrumental in providing families with the proper information and the necessary care for students to enter into worlds they would otherwise not have known. Noted as the person responsible for singlehandedly sending over 60,000 African Americans students to state, regional and national institutions of higher learning for 36 years, Purnell’s life came to an end on November 1, 2003. His students will forever remember his legacy of influence and success through colleges in the state of Illinois and beyond. This significant quest has impacted state institutions in a profound way. Hence, the state of Illinois has renamed the Higher Education Student Assistant Act to Silas Purnell Illinois Incentive for Access Grant Program in his honor.29

Mr. Purnell is a legendary figure that has impacted the higher education institution profoundly. However, some of Silas’ students were successful while others were not. While these profound efforts cannot be disregarded, I hope to delve deeper into the understanding the journeys of some of the students who were friends of Purnell’s students. What happened once they arrived? How did they survive in an environment that accepted them as numbers on documents but not as people with real needs?

In all, as reflected in DuBois’ work, integration of Blacks at PWIs made things a bit more complicated. He surveyed the school officials but the students who were token

representatives in a white world did not speak about their experiences. Even still, as Purnell championed the cause of partnering with institutions that did not traditionally accept the kind and caliber of students who experienced great hardship the inception of Blacks in PWIs during the late 60s was groundbreaking. However, the voices of Black students and their experiences are a vitally missing link. In this project, I hope to resuscitate the experiences of Blacks who attended Eastern Illinois University by exploring the question: What were the campus and community experiences of Black students at Eastern Illinois University during the late nineteen sixties and seventies? This study seeks to capture the ways in which these students negotiated race, space and identity within the context of a predominantly white rural town. This project is partially an oral history project because the major questions that I investigate will largely be answered through discussion with alumni and staff who were essential elements in impacting change at Eastern Illinois University during 1967-1982.

Overall, this study is significant also because contrary to similar studies, it investigates the successes of the Black students in an unwelcoming environment. EIU students and faculty were successful in many endeavors. I hope to learn what campus and community life was like for the cadre of African American students at Eastern Illinois University in the late 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. Themes that are present within their preliminary stories speak of how many prevailed in this new and strange environment.

Research Methodology

The corroboration of archival research and oral interviews will help to gain a real sense of what everyday experiences at Eastern real meant. Yoon K. Pak, in her work *Where I Go, I Will Always Be a Loyal American*, opens her text and provides much needed
clarity as I approached my own work. She states, “…in viewing history as stories of
everyday people, living everyday lives, disrupted by ephemeral moments of testing the
bounds of humanity, I highlight the experiences of students during a time of war.”
While she highlights the schooling experiences of Japanese youth on the eve of
interment, her elucidation of history here assists in situating the epistemological
framework of my own study. Hence, I examine the histories—“the everyday
experiences” of “everyday people” about their journeys in a racial hostile school
environment and community.

In garnering the histories of these past students and professors of Eastern Illinois
University, I examine the campus student newspaper (Daily Eastern News and Minority
Today) as well as the community newspaper (Journal Gazette and Times-Courier), the
campus yearbook-Warbler, faculty senate meeting minutes and surviving
 correspondences and records with the presidential files of the University, and limited
personal files of research participants. In corroboration with these archival sources, my
primary means of investigation is through oral history interviews.

Oral history methodology is traditionally implemented as an empowerment tool
for traditionally marginalized populations. In support of oral history, Paul Thompson
states, “Oral history by contrast (from traditional history) makes a much fairer trial
possible- witnesses can now also be called from the under-classes, the unprivileged, and
the defeated.... In so doing, oral history has radical implication for the social message of
history as a whole.”31 Through the use of the interviews, my project will document the
historical experiences of Black students; therefore, allowing their stories to be added to
the larger history of Eastern Illinois University, a traditionally white institution.

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30 Yook K.Pak, Where I Go, I Will Always Be A Loyal American: Schooling Seattle’s Japanese Americans
during World War II (Routledge. 2002).
A biography is an account of someone’s life written by someone else. However, in my interpretation, oral history is an account of someone’s life written by someone else with the active involvement of the subject. This provides the participant/narrator the opportunity to fact check, etc. giving them the ability to authorize the story that is presented for the public to digest. Many scholars regard this collaborative process as “shared authority,” as resounded by Michael Frisch. This shared authority speaks of the collaboration between researcher, scholar and author with its subject, its narrator. Linda Shopes states, “oral history provides outstanding opportunities to democratize the practice of history.” This collective approach of oral history allows for a greater understanding of the past. Shopes suggests, this collaborative process “…requires negotiation, give and take, and considerable good will.”

While oral history can provide revolutionary truths through understanding events more fully, the information shared must be verifiable. Donald Ritchie in Practical Guide of Doing Oral History argues, “a statement is not necessarily truer if written down at the time if recalled later in a testimony. Whether written or oral, evidence must be convincing and verifiable.” He goes on to state, “…Properly done, oral history helps to interpret and define written records and makes sense out of the most obscure decisions and events.” There are multiple ways to paint the same story. Though issues of interpretation, memory, access, race, etc. are present, oral history alongside traditional methodologies can serve as eyewitnesses to various events and can be beneficial in offering a more complete history. In some cases, traditional sources leave the researcher with multiple questions. The use of oral history in this project can be used to

34 Ibid.
possibly fill in the blanks and provide insight to generations to come.

Overall this approach proved effective in acquiring an overall analysis of key events that occurred during their time on campus in addition to how the campus experiences impacted their post undergraduate educational and life experiences. In addition this basic questionnaire served as a jogger to provide a level of triangulation and corroboration with evidence found in newspaper articles and other archival data as well as testimonies between participants.

Outline of the Study

The outline of this study, excluding the introduction, proceeds as follows: Chapter Two provides a regional overview of Normal schools in Illinois as well as a brief overview of what Charleston, Illinois meant for Black students and citizens at large. Chapter Three provides an introduction of key individuals who acted as major resources to Black students at Eastern, this chapter also introduces the first set of interview research participants who attended Eastern during 1967-1982. Chapter Four lays out key happenings at Eastern during 1967-75 that had a direct or indirect impact on Black student life. This includes the great impact of the relationship between President Quincy Doudna and Blacks students at Eastern. Chapter Five provides an introduction of the second set of research interview participants, those who attended Eastern form 1976-1982. Chapter Six reveals an outline of major occurrences during the 1975-82 period. Chapter Seven provides a conclusion of and analysis of the study revealing the successful efforts of both waves of students and ends with the recent numbers of minorities on Eastern’s campus.
CHAPTER 2

ILLINOIS AND NORMAL SCHOOLS

Normal schools were institutions whose primary goal was to train teachers in the way of instruction. For decades however, there was no required training needed to become a teacher; in fact, those that selected the teachers were neither trained themselves. The common occurrence of inadequate teachers became problematic and the normal school idea originated as a response to early to mid nineteenth century rebirth of the common school era. Abbe de Lasalle spearheaded the original movement in France with the *école normale* in an effort to train teachers during 1681. By 1697, Germany teacher seminaries caught on to the idea under the leadership of Hermann August Francke. By 1823 Reverend Samuel Read Hall America established the first normal school in Massachusetts. The influence of American educators like Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and Calvin Stowe (husband of author Harriet Beecher Stowe) during 1835 and 1843 in their voyages to observe the normal schools of Europe proved beneficial to American society. Upon their return, a total of four normal schools were birthed in Massachusetts.

The movement continued as Illinois and other states developed normal schools. After being granted statehood in 1818, some seven years later Illinois attempted to establish a system of education. In 1825, this law gave youth between 6-21 years of age access to free schooling. Two years later, due to monetary discrepancies that forced parents to pick up the tab, the system failed. In 1855, finally as the last free state to do so, Illinois established its public school system. The successful passage of the *School Law*

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of 1855 that made free schooling drastically increased the need for teachers throughout the state.\textsuperscript{38} Hence, the normal school concept made its way to central Illinois. Two years later, in 1857, Illinois State Normal University in Normal, Illinois became the tenth American normal school.\textsuperscript{39}

Each normal school varied, but generally teachers were teenagers or slightly older, sometimes trained for a year or less than gradually moving to two years of training. Christine Orgen in \textit{The American State Normal School} writes that the accessibility provided by normal schools gave many marginalized groups (including women, Blacks, Native American and middle to lower class citizens) heightened hopes to gain a new level of social and economic mobility.\textsuperscript{40} Medieval historian John Freed called the normal school, considering their efforts to educate the underserved, “the community college of the nineteenth century.”\textsuperscript{41}

Between 1857 and 1920 there were five normal schools established in various sectors of Illinois. Each with its own characteristic given by the leadership and faculty that steered it, as the teachers worked laboriously to educate the Illinois citizenry to become efficiently trained to meet the needs of the growing common school population. Today, a large majority of degree-seeking students are enrolled in over two hundred of these normal institutions.\textsuperscript{42} In Illinois there are currently eight institutions that began

\textsuperscript{38} In 1854, of the 79 counties in Illinois there were 4,215 schools. There were 95 counties with 7,694 schools some two years later. Cook, John Williston, \textit{The Educational History of Illinois: Growth and Progress in Educational Affairs of the State from the Earliest Day to the Present with Portraits and Biographies} (Chicago, 1912), 53-78.


\textsuperscript{40} Ibid. 1-2, 53-61.


\textsuperscript{42} Ogren, Christine A. \textit{The American State Normal School: II An Instrument of Great Good} (New York, NY.2005), 23-35. Medieval scholar, John Freed contributes largely to the subject of Illinois Normal State University, in his 2009 work \textit{Educating Illinois}. A well-written work, Freed spends most of his introduction correcting the works of two previous works (Charles Harper and Helen Marshall) done on the subject of university. In speaking to the role of “normal school” being researched he highlights the
with the original purpose of training teachers. These school include: Illinois State University, Eastern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, in central and southern Illinois. In the Chicago area, Northern Illinois University, Chicago State University, Northeastern Illinois University and National Louis University serve the northern populace. Most have expanded their missions, however, their respective histories remain relevant in capturing the true essence of the climate of higher education in Illinois and the nation at large.

Nineteenth Century Illinois

In this chapter I will briefly contextualize the history of higher at education in the state of Illinois with particular focus on the original four normal schools. I will layout the basic founding tenets, shifts in change of name, highlight key figures and mention the introduction Blacks to these institutions in an effort to carve out a space to discuss the lived data with detail in subsequent chapters. Emphasis will be further placed on Eastern Illinois University, as this will ultimately be the focus of the entire work. I examine these particular institutions primarily because of their role and function as teacher training institutions of Illinois (with the exclusion of Western Illinois University and Chicago State University). These institutions are at most five hours apart and at least an hour and a half a part, yet four of the five were established with the uniformed
purpose of teacher training. What were some basic threads that caused these happenings? Are there any connecting themes that translate from one institution to the next?

Illinois State Normal University (ISNU)

“An ACT for the establishment and maintenance of a Normal University.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the people of the state of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly That C. B. Denio, of Jo Daviess county, Simeon Wright, of Lee county, Daniel Wilkins, of McLean county, C. E. Hovey, of Peoria county, George B. Rex, of Pike county, Samuel W. Moulton, of Shelby county, John Gillespie, of Jasper county, George Bunsen, of St. Clair county, Wesley Sloan, of Pope county, Ninian W. Edwards, of Sangamon county, John Eden, of Moultrie county, Flavel Mosely of Cook county, Wm. II. Wells, of Cook county, Albert R. Shannon, of White county, and the superintendent of public instruction, ex officio, with their associates, who shall be elected as herein provided, and their successors, are hereby created a body corporate and politic, to be styled "The Board of Education of the State of Illinois,"...

Section 4. The objects of the said normal university shall be to qualify teachers for the common schools of this state, by imparting instruction in the art of teaching, in all branches of study which pertain to a common school education, in the elements of the natural sciences, including agricultural chemistry, animal and vegetable physiology, in the fundamental laws of the United States and of the state of Illinois in regard to the rights and duties of citizens, and such other studies as the board of education may from time to time prescribe....”

In February of 1857 during the Twentieth General Assembly the legislature decided to adopt the normal school idea. Though the Assembly agreed with the idea of the school it provided no funding to erect buildings or the choice for the location of the school. The first governing body, the State Board of Education would accept cash bids from Batavia, Bloomington, Peoria, and Washington. Bloomington offered the highest cash amount of $141,000; their proposal was accepted almost immediately with a few contingences.

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48 Ibid. p. 298. Sec. 8.
In the spirit of educational reformist Horace Mann, Charles Hovey along with Jonathan Turner (and others) migrated from places like Massachusetts to educate the masses. In December of 1853, the most important meeting regarding public education in the state occurred. From much collaboration, the Illinois State Teachers Association was started in Bloomington. The journal, The Illinois Teacher in 1854 was beneficial in circulating news to the community. The journal and the newly established group would serve Illinois well in widely informing the community of the latest news and debates. This outlet would later be instrumental in helping to garner support for the first normal school in Illinois.

On February 18, 1857, Gov. William Bissell signed the bill that would create the first public normal school university in the state of Illinois. This bill also established the first Board of Education in the State of Illinois as its governing body. There were various individuals who worked as a collective to ensure the success of the new educational system. Jesse W. Fell took up the campaign for Bloomington and obtained financial backing totaling $141,000. Abraham Lincoln, acting as attorney for the board, drew up the bond guaranteeing that Bloomington citizens would fulfill their financial commitments.

Jonathan Baldwin Turner, a teacher-farmer with a missionary zeal for education, proved to be one of the most influential sources not only in the establishment of Illinois State but schools throughout the state. A strong proponent of industrial education, Turner believed that the traditional form of study was a waste of time and that learning industrial concepts of mechanics and agriculture would invoke society to live beyond the status quo. Thought he had hoped for an “industrial” university in Normal in

49 Those mentioned in the Law at the start of this section.
50 Later, in 1963, this organization became the Illinois Education Association.
51 Sponsored in the House by representative Samuel W Moulton.
1857\textsuperscript{52}, his revolutionary approach and ideology would come to fruition some ten years later with the founding of Illinois Industrial University (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). For many, Turner was to Illinois what Horace Mann proved to be to the rest of the nation.

In 1857, offering a three-curriculum along a model school, Illinois State Normal University (ISNU) opened it doors. By 1907, ISNU became a 4-year baccalaureate institution. On January 1, 1964, Illinois dropped “normal” from its name. Two years later the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) determined that Illinois State should become a liberal arts university, offering doctoral degrees etc.

Illinois State was coeducational from the beginning. However, the idea of allowing Black students access to the normal or model schools was quite another story. Newton Bateman, Superintendent of Public Instruction,\textsuperscript{53} in 1868, stood out as an advocate for the education of Black children. The 1855 Act made schools free and allowed taxes to be allocated for schools but this excluded Black students. The local schools had the ultimate say on whether to allow Black students or not, but Bateman proved to be a true proponent of Black education in Illinois as he aided in the passage of a resolution that ensured access to schools in Bloomington and within the district.\textsuperscript{54}

Richard Edwards, the second president of the normal school from 1820-1908 was elected the Superintendent of Public Instruction.\textsuperscript{55} Edwards, like Turner, was often taunted about his abolitionist views. Within three months of the opening of the normal school, his ideologies would be put to the test. A colored girl, reports the \textit{Chicago}

\textsuperscript{52}This was evident in the original naming of the institution, only Illinois State Normal University and Illinois Industrial University were the only schools in the with around that era that ended with ‘university.’ In 1857, Jonathan Turner had big plans to be more than a normal school, but a full comprehensive university with an Industrial edge.

\textsuperscript{53}Bateman a student of Turners held this position twice-from 1859-63 and again 1865-1875.


\textsuperscript{55}Charles Hovey was the first president serving from 1857-1861.
Republican, just came to class one morning and spoke no words but expected to be taught just as the white student did routinely. Initially all looked in amazement at her presence as the teacher continued to teach. But there was another side to the story that was not so pretty. There was much backlash from the community, especially from those that had given money to start the institution. They said:

Here is an institution supported at great expense by the taxpayers of Illinois, and run in the interest of nigger-radicals, and radical niggers. Our hope is that if every white people have a voice in controlling the affairs of Illinois again, they will blot out of existence this, and all similar institutions, that carried on for the benefit, save only as miscegenation and money-squandering establishments.\textsuperscript{56}

The impact of whites’ response seemingly caused the institution to take drastic measures. According to an article in July of 1876 the \textit{Champaign County News Gazette}, Rosanna Lindsey is said to be the first person of color to be allowed to enter ISNU in 1876. However, there is no university record of her ever having attended. After multiple searches in the university’s archives and admission registries, no record has been recovered of Lindsey’s presence. It is not clear if “the people’s institution” did an effective job covering up the presence of a colored girl for various reasons or not. The article reports, “Rosanna P. Lindsey, who graduated at the state normal school, last commencement, is the first colored graduate of that institution. She is reported to have maintained herself well throughout the course and her closing exercise is very creditable.”\textsuperscript{57} The article immediately continues with news of McLean County and its bid for a new prison. While there is not a clear record of Lindsey’s presence at the university, historian John Freed on his recent documentation of the history of Illinois State University believes because of public scrutiny it was evident that all evidence of her existence at Illinois State were erased. It is believed that Lindsey was a resident of

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Chicago Times}, February 22, 1868.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Champaign County News Gazette, McLean County Champaign County News Gazette}, July 19, 1876. \textit{The Pantagraph, June} 22, 1876; and \textit{Chicago Tribune}, June 22 and June 23, 1876.
Champaign County and its’ newspaper made sure to document the accomplishment.\footnote{The 1905 Index also has a picture of a graduating senior, Anna Amelia Smith, a teacher in Quincy, who appears to have been an African American and who returned to Normal and earned a bachelor of education degree in 1923.} The\textit{Chicago Tribune} notes her presence as well. However in 1905, nearly thirty years after Lindsey’s graduation, Anna Ameila Smith, another colored girl is pictured as a graduating senior.\footnote{Ibid.} The typical token representation, as will be later documented, was prominent in most Illinois schools along with institutions across the nation.

However, for ISNU the issue of representation of Black students had not shown drastic improvements. To date there are only 6.7 percent of Black students in the entire university. Put another way, of the 18, 714 students only 1,251 of them are Black as of spring of 2014.

ISNU was the first normal school in Illinois, but there would be many more to that would just the ranks. In response to the demand of student body, the locations of these schools would cover the state of Illinois.
Southern Illinois Normal University (SINU)

“AN ACT to establish and maintain the Southern Illinois Normal University

§ 2. The objects of the said Southern Illinois Normal University shall be to qualify teachers for the common schools of this state by imparting instruction in the art of teaching in all branches of study which pertain to a common school education, in the elements of the natural sciences, including agricultural chemistry, animal and vegetable physiology, in the fundamental laws of the United States, and of the state of Illinois, in regard to the rights and duties of citizens, and such other studies as the board of education may, from time to time, prescribe.”

“Believing the time has fully come when the educational interest of Illinois demand more than one Normal school and that the people of Southern Illinois are ready to sustain an institution of this kind, either as an auxiliary school to our present University or entirely independent of it, we earnestly solicit the co-operation of all educational men in the State in securing this result. Therefore be it....”

Though ISNU was ‘flourishing’, the residents of southern Illinois believe they were missing out on a vast opportunity for advancement. Hence, during the Convention of the 1868 held in Centralia Superintendent Bateman, President Richard Edwards of ISNU, and Professor Jonathan B. Turner among others were all active participants. During the state convention in Centralia it was time to further advance the educational climate of the state. Including a new normal school could be the answer. The convention would prove to have a lasting impact. During this time, Illinois made a decision to require compulsory education for all of its’ citizenry as well as requirements for certification of its’ teaching force.

That following spring, in March of 1869, the General Assembly voted to have SINC to become Illinois’ second normal school. Pana, Olney, Carlyle, Centralia, Tamaroa, Duquoin and Carbondale were all contenders for the next normal location.

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61 Eli G. Lentz, Seventy-Five Years in Retrospect, p 4. This was written by Simeon Wright at the Centralia convention.
However, because Reverend Clark Braden, President of the Southern Illinois College was a major participant in the Centralia Convention his influence as well as Governor John McAuley Palmers’ Southern Illinois roots, made Jackson County of Carbondale the winning contender. With just $75,000.00 appropriated by the senate SINC opened its doors in 1874.\textsuperscript{62} By 1876 there were 5 graduates by 1913 there were 39.\textsuperscript{63}

In regards to the race question, things appeared a bit differently. Historian John Freed states in comparison with ISNU that, “Yet there was no comparable attempt to hide the presence of African Americans at Carbondale. Robert Allyn, the first president of Southern (1874-92), reported in 1874 that when that school opened in September there were 154 students "among whom were two of African descent."\textsuperscript{64} This racial openness seems to remain throughout the history of the university, at least in comparison to surrounding institutions. According to the \textit{Chicago Egyptian}, Alexander Lane is known as the first male black student at SIUC. He came in 1876. As a former slave, he became an educator, a physician and an Illinois State Representative from Chicago. Lane lived in Tamaroa, in southern Illinois, when he enrolled in the teachers college in 1876; just two years after instruction at Southern Illinois Normal University began. The \textit{Egyptian} goes on to say that two females were known to enroll earlier, but their names were not known.\textsuperscript{65} This made Lane the third African American person to attend SIUC, but the first person to be identified as having attended.\textsuperscript{66}

In sorting through archival data, SIUC was “progressive” in this movement towards racial openness. In 1890 about 10 black students can be viewed in yearbooks.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid. 37.
\textsuperscript{64} John Freed, \textit{Educating Illinios}, 120.
\textsuperscript{65} These two could have been the ones noted earlier by President Robert Allyn, those of African descent.\textsuperscript{66} “SIU Celebrating First African American Male Student”. \textit{The Chicago Egyptian}. \textit{A publication of the Southern Illinois University Foundation. Special Issue}: January 2012. http://www.siuf.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Alexander-Lane.pdf.
By 1916 about 15 students are pictured in various clubs and organizations. In 1922 approximately 20 Black students were enrolled at SIUC. In 1927 there were approximately 30 black students. As with most institutions at this time, housing concerns for black women posed a problem in 1942 according to university correspondence. By 1962, just as neighboring institutions enrolled blacks for the first time, SIUC awarded honorary doctorate degrees to African Americans. In 1964, SIUC produced a black doctoral candidate. Overall, SIUC seemed to be leaps and bounds ahead of the crowd in its acceptance and inclusion of black students at least 50 to 60 years prior to its peer institutions.

This sentiment of inclusion was confirmed during a recent oral history interview I conducted with 75-year old SIUC alum John Holmes. Holmes shares how his experience at SIUC was not an isolated one. Holmes states, “It was a family affair!” Both his parents went to SIUC and received teaching certificates and ultimately their Bachelor and Masters degrees. His father received his Master of Arts degree during the 1920s and his mother her Bachelor’s degree in the 1920s. When asked about how he believed the institution was seemingly open to Blacks, he highlighted the career of SIUCs President Morris W. Delyte. Holmes says, “Delyte was an avid person of diversity.” Delyte a native of Illinois went to college in Missouri, Maine and Iowa. As an educator at Indiana State Teachers’ College and Ohio State University, Delyte became president of SIU in 1948 and remained there until he retired in 1970. Enduring the challenging times of protest during the 1960s Delyte was known to keep a “tight ship,” but nonetheless relevant and connected to the culture of openness that SIUC seems to have possessed.

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68 Wilbert Bowers in the Department of Microbiology.
As of fall of 2013, of the 8,320 total students at SIUC, 21 percent or 1,749 is Black. So proportionately, among the schools studied, SIUC ranks highest in the actual number of Black students it retains.

To advance the practice of training schools teachers in the state of Illinois Northern and Eastern were the next schools to be established. Their efforts would expand the movement of the creation of more normal schools in Illinois.

Northern Illinois State Normal School (NISNS)

“An Act to establish and to maintain the Northern Illinois State Normal School.

§ 2. The object of the said Northern Illinois State Normal School shall be to qualify teachers for the common schools of this State by imparting instruction in the art of teaching in all branches of study which pertain to a common school education, in the elements of the natural and of the physical sciences, in the fundamental laws of the United States and of the State of Illinois, in regards to the rights and duties of citizens.”

Becoming widely known for its production of barbed wires, the booming city, which was once the desolate city of DeKalb, attracted national attention. With wealthy men like Joseph Glidden, Isaac Ellwood and Jacob Haish making investments in the town, the prairie land became known as an industrial territory.

Before the state legislature in 1894, President of ISNU Edwin C. Hewitt began to express his concerns and challenged the state of Illinois to produce more normal schools. He was concerned that Illinois lagged behind such states as New York, Massachusetts and even Wisconsin in this matter. During this time, New York had twelve such schools while Massachusetts had nine. And Wisconsin as Hewitt states,

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69 Southern Illinois University Carbondale-
http://www.irs.siu.edu/quickfacts/students/students_by_race.php
“had more than the both of them.” The “competition” of providing adequate training for teachers, lead to a quick change.

The first democratic Illinois Governor in over forty years, John Peter Altgeld was elected the year prior in 1893. Hewitt’s request was timely because Altgeld focused on bettering the lives of laborers, farmers, immigrants and others he believed to deprived finer opportunities of society. A proponent of the normal school expansion, Altgeld understood the potential to advance the educational level of the masses. Altgeld began to identity influential individuals in the state that could assist help in championing the cause of the normal school. Clinton Rosette, editor of DeKalb Chronicle because of his vocal stance on local and national issues of the time that he was considered for leadership roles that would ultimately impact the establishment of the normal school. Both President Cook of ISNU and Governor Altgeld encouraged Rosette to run for the open position with the State Board of Education and to take the position. Rosette’s influence would make the rest of the body open to the idea of additional normal schools in the state of Illinois. Soon a bill was lead by Illinois senator Daniel D. Hunt of the Committee on Education. Hunt on January 10, 1895 introduced Senate Bill No. 2, titled “An Act to establish and maintain the Northern Illinois State Normal School.” Another favorable factor that aided in moving the bill through the legislature was a second bill introduced less than a month later by Senator Isaac B. Craig of Mattoon to locate a sister normal school in the eastern part of the state. Though many opposed the idea of two normal schools proposed in one congressional session, this collective approach

73 Ibid. Mattoon is the sister city of Charleston, Illinois. Located approximately 10 miles apart these two cities would strongly compete for to have the Eastern Illinois normal school in their locale.
proved to beneficial. The cities of Dixon, Rockford, Freeport, Polo, Oregon and Fulton were key contenders for the location of the Northern normal school. However, because of the ample water supply that DeKalb offered, it was the main competitor. On May 15 both the Northern bill and the Eastern bills were passed.

At its chartering in 1895 the institution was called Northern Illinois State Normal School in 1895 and opened its doors in 1899. By 1921 it was referred to as Northern Illinois State Teachers College. Ever changing in its name, in 1955 Northern was known as Northern Illinois State College. Then ultimately expanding their offerings beyond education degrees in 1957 Northern was became Northern Illinois University. Though now known more as a liberal arts institution, Northern has maintained this name ever since.

John W. Cook was the institution’s first president who served from July of 1899-August of 1919. During Cook’s tenure, NIU accepted its first Black student. In 1915, Fanny Ruth Patterson graduated from NIU earning her degree in education. Currently there is limited information regarding the life of Patterson and the racial climate of that time. However, I was able to learn that the influx of African American students to NIU occurred during the mid-1970s, around the same time as Eastern. Prior to then, in 1968 under the leadership of McKinley “Deacon” Davis the CHANCE program began. CHANCE served as an alternative measure to recruit students who were not academically prepare to attend college, but allowed the students the necessary support

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74 Ibid. 23.
75 Northern Illinois University website - http://www.niu.edu/about/fastfacts.shtml.
77 Dr. Laverne Gyant, e-mail correspondence with author, June 10, 2013. Dr. Gyant is the current Director of Black Studies at NIU.
to succeed. With the implementation of programs like CHANCE, Upward Bound and Black Studies Northern has recruited and retained a sizeable Black population.

As of fall of 2013 of the 15,814 undergraduate students at Northern, 17% are Black. These 2,688 Blacks students rank second among the schools in this study (percentage wise), but ranks first in regards to the largest number of Black bodies on its campus of the schools studied. These high numbers are mainly attributed to its proximity to the city of Chicago and other surrounding suburbs and townships.

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78 About McKinley “Deacon” Davis
http://www.chance.niu.edu/chance/about/about_davis/index.shtml
79 Northern Illinois University website- http://www.niu.edu/about/fastfacts.shtml
Eastern Illinois State Normal School (EISNS)


§ 2. The object of the said Eastern Illinois State Normal School shall be to qualify teachers for the common schools of this state by imparting instruction in the art of teaching in all branches of study which pertain to a common school education, in the elements of the natural and of the physical sciences, in the fundamental laws of the United States and of the state of Illinois, in regard to the rights and duties of citizens...”

In 1880, public school enrollment in Illinois rose from approximately 738,000 students to approximately 959,000 by 1900. The educational boom in Illinois was great. Who would train all of these students? As previously mentioned, along with wanting to maintain a competitive edge Illinois needed to respond to the needs of its citizenry. The neighborly competition from Wisconsin and Minnesota and their adequate training for teachers, coupled with the vast increase of public school students, Illinois was backed up against the wall in creating more trained teachers. In 1895 Northern, Eastern and four years later, Western Illinois in Macomb would be established all with the goal to train future teachers.

With approximately 12 contenders for the new normal school in eastern Illinois, among them being Danville, the hotly contested race existed between Mattoon and Charleston. Proponents for Mattoon, located just 10 miles west of Charleston, were confident in their ability to win the bid. As time neared for the decision to be made, James Clark, an influential leader of Mattoon solicited the help of Isaac Ellwood seeing had an influential role in the DeKalb contest wrote a letter to him asking for his help to ensure that Mattoon received the bid. Offering money, Ellwood declined his request.

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Ultimately Charleston was approved as the official site for the eastern normal school and, was chartered on May 22, 1895. It officially opened its doors as Eastern Illinois Teachers’ Training institute in 1899. Eastern, like similar state schools in the United States, transformed through various developments and name changes. The new normal school during 1899-1921 was known as Eastern Illinois Normal School. In 1921 it was called Eastern Illinois State Teachers College. By 1947 the school was know as Eastern Illinois State College. And finally in 1957 in its final trek to become a full comprehensive institution, it became known as Eastern Illinois University.

While still called a “normal” school, Eastern’s earlier known Black graduated in 1910. According to available records, Zella Powell was a member of the prominent Powell family of Mattoon, Illinois. Zella possessed love for education. She became a private teacher in Mattoon between 1910-1914. She continued her education at the Chicago Normal School from 1914 to 1916. From 1916-17 she was a substitute teacher in an elementary school in Chicago. After this period, no other information is known about Powell. By 1967, 35 Blacks are noted in attendance at Eastern. It was not until 50 years following Powell’s tenure does the influx of Black students began to arrive to Charleston. Many of these students came from urban areas like East St. Louis, St. Louis, Chicago, and Indianapolis and even places like Miami, FL.

Historian Earl Hayter captures the essences of what it was like for many Black students who attended normal schools in Illinois. He suggests, “the continued grievances of Black students today, however, are no doubt caused largely by the fact that they find themselves on a predominantly white campus in a wholly white environment.”

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community that has only recently accepted minorities as permanent residents.”

Earl Hayter speaks during the mid-seventies but the sentiment he expressed was applicable to Black students of Eastern Illinois University and white community at Charleston in the mid-seventies and before.

Blacks in Charleston, Illinois

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Blacks</th>
<th>% of Blacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>9,616</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>9,335</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>14,203</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>25,235</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>27,042</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>30,093</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>34,146</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>34,517</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>35,108</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>37,315</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>38,470</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>40,328</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>42,860</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>47,815</td>
<td>303***</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>52,260</td>
<td>883****</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>51,649</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>53,196</td>
<td>1,215</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>53,873</td>
<td>2,200 approx.</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the population of Blacks in Charleston, Illinois has always remained below five percent, the history of Blacks in Coles County is quite significant. Most notable is the trial in which President Abraham Lincoln served as defense attorney,

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83 Earl Hayter, p. 379.
84 Ogbomo, *Photographic Images*, 4. The chart has been adapted from this text. However, the author directly added the last century. This has been no significant difference in minority representation over the years.
85 Ibid. 6-7
second is the bogus lynching spectacle during the middle to late nineteenth century.\footnote{It is not know if there were more than one lynching that occurred during this time period, however the information provided is where data was available.}

Robert Matson, a Kentucky slave owner traveled to Coles County with his slaves Jane Bryant and her four children. After being angered by the fact Matson were allowing the slaves to be free, Matson’s wife threatened to send Jane and her husband, Anthony, who had lived in Illinois, back to the South along with their children as slaves. Understanding the laws regarding slavery in the South and of the Black code laws in the north, the Bryant’s challenged this threat. After seeking help from local abolitionists Dr. Hiram Rutherford and Gideon Ashmore, Matson challenged the Bryant’s in a court of law. Abraham Lincoln, the future president, represented Matson during the 1847 case.

After careful deliberations Matson lost the case and the Bryant family eventually were freed and are ported to Liberia. It is unclear why the (soon to be) “great emancipator” would defend slavery in a “free”\footnote{Slavery was prohibited in the \textit{Illinois Constitution of 1818}.} state. However, historian and past professor at Eastern, Onaiwu Ogbomo reported that the locally contrived legend in Charleston assumed that Lincoln was being strategic when he took on the trial because he was sure his client would not win.\footnote{Nancy Shick-Easter and Bonnie Brook Clark. \textit{Round the Square: Life in Downtown, 1830-1998} (Charleston, IL: Easter-Chick Publishing, 1999) p. 48} Whatever the case, the Lincoln of 1863 seemed to be very different, at least publicly, from the Lincoln that debated Stephen Douglass in Charleston just four years earlier. During the debate on the subject of equality and citizenship Lincoln stated in part in response to the crowd about his opponent Stephen Douglass’ and his stance on Blacks:

…He shall have no occasion to ever ask it again, for I tell him very frankly that I am not in favor of negro citizenship. [Renewed applause.]…Now my opinion is that the different States have power to make a negro a citizen under the Constitution of the United States if they choose. The Dred Scott decision decides that they have not that power. If the State of Illinois has that power I
should be opposed to the exercise of it. [Cries of “good,” “good,” and applause.] That is all I have to say about it.” 89

Lincoln’s stance on equality here is evident. The co-mingling of the races would “forever” be forbidden because of the “physical differences” that existed between them. Lincoln was also straightforward on his stance of Negro citizenship in Illinois, as he would be “opposed to the exercise of it.”

Many Charlestonians agreed with their presidential pick and their racial attitudes and prejudices were reflected then, and would also be apparent some forty years later. In 1888 William Moore, a Negro citizen from Virginia, was accused of assault while waiting in a Mattoon train station with a white woman from Effingham (a neighboring city of Charleston) for two and a half hours. After leaving to get food for the woman, he was arrested upon his return, and was later jailed and awaited trial. Once the public got word of the alleged assault, Moore was lynched in Charleston. 90

There are numerous other instances of blatant racism against Blacks in Charleston. The attitude and posture of the white citizens was what many would classify as “normal” for the time period, and Black students several decades later would bear witness to its’ vestiges.

Historian and Professor Onaiwu Ogbomo91 in his history of Blacks in Coles County provide a great depiction of the community of Charleston through the use of pictures. He captures business owners as well as slave labor. Ogbomo as noted in Table 1 above, of the 9,600 original residents only 33 were Black. These numbers remained consistently low from over a century. Put another way, in 1840.03 percent were Black

then by 2000 only 2.1 percent are Black. The growth of Black population in this county is little to none. As mentioned previously, the presence of Blacks on Eastern’s campus reflected the dismal numbers until the late 1960s. In 1967, the existence of African Americans on Eastern’s campus was quite pale; of the 7,220 white students only 35 were Blacks.

Understanding this history, it is safe to surmise that Charleston did not openly welcome Black students, as it was not the norm. On one occasion during the early 1970s, men with guns chased Black students on their motorcycles in order to scare them into returning back to the inner cities.92 One alumnus who graduated from EIU in 1970s stated this in regards to his time in Charleston and at EIU: “We all wanted to graduate and get out of Charleston…. It was a tough time walking down the streets sometimes. We had friends and supporters, but it didn’t feel like that was enough.”93

Though the presence of Black students into Charleston and at Eastern was something relatively new for the communities, in spite of some struggle, there was some victory. In my dissertation project, I share about the nature of campus and community life for the participants of this study during in the late 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. There is much to gain from the wisdom and insight of these students and faculty.

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93 Ibid. This quote is from Michael Jeffries EIU alumni. Jeffries also served as associate dean of students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and recently retired.
CHAPTER 3
OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS, 1967-1975

Introduction

In 1989, legal scholar and Critical Race theorist Richard Delgado speaks to the scholarly community in an effort to explore the notion of storytelling in our teaching and writing. Delgado describes the act of interjecting a perspective of history that interrupts the majoritarian or widely held viewpoint, in an effort to allow communities of colors to become free. Delgado states, “oppressed groups have known instinctively that stories are an essential tool to their own survival and liberation”94 Requesting the stories of communities of color is a way of respecting their struggles and glorifying their triumphs. This avenue of revealing truth is power, and therefore powerful. Delgado notes, “Stories, parables, chronicles, and narratives are powerful means for destroying mindset -- the bundle of presuppositions, received wisdoms, and shared understandings against a background of which legal and political discourse takes place.”

Though historical in nature, this project acts as a counter story. Here, I counter the prevailing institutional story of Eastern Illinois University, and intercept it with detailed accounts of those African Americans who attended Eastern from 1967-1982. These participants were some of those whose voices were critical to the advancement and development of the African American experience at Eastern. Listed in order of their years of attendance, Edgar Matthew Jr., Elmer Pullen, Nathaniel Anderson, Marvinetta (Woodley) Penn, and Yvette (Jackson) Moyo were students during this time period. They shared their candid stories of struggle and progress. Also included in these

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counter-story telling are two African American professors, Dr. Bill T Ridgeway and Dr. Jimmie Franklin.

Prior to delving into the stories of the students, I spoke with Dr. Bill T Ridgeway, who allowed me to gain a great contextual sense of what the campus and community was like during his time at the university from 1966-1995. Though unable to garner for formal interview, Ridgeway provides pertinent information regarding the first few Black professors at Eastern.

Biography of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>TIME OF TENURE</th>
<th>HOMETOWN</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dr. Bill Ridgeway</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1966-95</td>
<td>Columbia, Missouri</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dr. Jimmie Franklin</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1970-86</td>
<td>Meridian, Mississippi</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Edgar Matthews</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1964-69</td>
<td>East St. Louis, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Elmer Pullen</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1967-73, 1967-2002</td>
<td>Cairo, IL</td>
<td>Student/Staf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dr. Nathaniel Anderson</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1970-73, 1976-77</td>
<td>East St. Louis, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Marvinetta (Woodley) Penn</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1971-74</td>
<td>East St. Louis, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yvette (Jackson) Moyo</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1971-74</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dr. Anne E. Smith*

In the 1960’s there were originally three African American professors employed by Eastern. Dr. Ann E. Smith was the first full Black professor at Eastern Illinois University in 1960. Later Ann E. Smith served on the Board of Trustees at the University of Illinois and became Chair of the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Committee, which was a standing committee during 1985.\(^{95}\) She also served on the Finance and Audit Committee as well as the Student Welfare and Activities Committee. While at

\(^{95}\) University of Illinois Board of Trustee Minutes-July 1, 1986-June 30,1988 p 463.
Eastern, Smith served in the Theatre Arts Department until 1966. Ridgeway remembers her well. He recalls,

She was here when I was interviewing. We talked, though we didn’t realize it at the time, we were from the same hometown. She was from Columbia, Missouri and I was from Columbia, Missouri! We even attended the same high school, Lincoln University High School. Her father was the principal of Fredrick Douglass in Columbia, Missouri.96

Inside the presidential archives at Eastern, President Doudna makes mention of her being the first “Negro” professor of color, there is not much mention besides who she is and denotes her as a costume designer on many productions.97

The second Black professor, Dr. Frances Pollard, served as the Assistant Dean of the University’s library during the 1960’s. Joining the faculty in 1962, she was also served as Director of the Library Science Program for Master of Arts degree student candidates. Ridgeway remembers some of the struggles Dr. Pollard experienced in earning her tenure at the university.

She was a writer and a good scholar. She came here with much experience. When I served at Fort McClellan, where I did my basic training for the military, she was a librarian there. She was a Military Post Librarian. So, she came to Eastern with much experience and with her doctorate. When she got, here she was an associate professor for a long time. She organized, operated and pushed for that library science program. She did a lot. She was associate professor of a long time…. Academic rank counts!98

Eventually, Pollard earned her academic rank as full professor and later died in her hometown of Florence, Alabama during a leave of absence from the University.

Dr. Bill Tom Ridgeway

96 Bill Ridgeway, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, January 21, 2010, transcript.
98 Bill Ridgeway, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, January 21, 2010, transcript.
Dr. Bill Tom Ridgeway would prove to be a critical link in providing sound advice on my quest to uncover the journey of African Americans at Eastern Illinois University. Ridgeway, a man of 84 years with a sharp mind and gigantic sense of humor, allowed me into his home for a conversation that lasted well over three hours. He helped me situate my argument and gain a greater grasp of the history of Coles County, Illinois and the presence of African Americans at Eastern. The discussion was extremely beneficial as it assisted me in shaping the trajectory for this project.

At the introduction of the discussion, I sat nearly mute to all sounds around me, listening to the vast amount of knowledge to which I became privy. As the discussion ensued, I responded with surprise at some of this rich history I was learning nearly ten years after graduating from the university. Dr. Ridgeway replied to my responses with a bit of frustration.

See, I get upset, because every group of Black people that come to this University seems to think that they were the first ones to be here! . . . Pardon that I get so upset about it. . . People that come to Eastern always believe that there was nothing happening in Charleston. But there was always something happening!99

Ridgeway’s frustration, though abbreviated, is central to my experience and important to highlight. His frustration encapsulates the very essence and rationale for my research. As a student at Eastern in the latter part of the 1990’s, I felt an extreme sense of isolation. As I walked through the quad and corridors of the various buildings on campus, and perusing through the town for local service projects with my sorority or to shop at the local grocery store, there was no visible evidence of someone who looked like me, felt like me, or someone that ever identified with my struggle of loneliness, ever existed in that terrain. There was hardly ever any mention of African Americans and their contributions in Charleston, Illinois or on Eastern’s campus. As was obvious from

99 Ibid.
Ridgeway was born on August 26, 1927 in Columbia, Missouri. Directly following high school he went to Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee. He arrived at Lane in September of 1945 and in February of 1946 was drafted into the military for a stay of 26-months. He was discharged with the understanding that he would join the Reserves. However, he began to focus on building his own career and learning, and needed to make a choice for further schooling. Deciding to move closer to home he attended Friends College in Wichita, Kansas, which he described as a Quaker-based liberal arts college. Ridgeway states, “As far as looking out for the rights of Negroes, Friends College was the best place to go.” He graduated from Friends in 1951 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. During that same year, he married Leta Ridgeway and together they raised three children: Mark, Myra and Beth.

Ridgeway worked as a surgical technician at Veteran’s Administration in Wichita, Kansas following his time in World War II. He explained that every time somebody introduced him, they would say, “This is Bill Ridgeway, he is the first what was he the first at…?” he exclaimed, “We’re sick and tired of being the first.” He wanted to do something different. He sought out law enforcement. When hired on as a Sheriff he said, “…being black still prevailed in a way, because they sought to hire and diversify the police force.” Ridgeway spent three years as a Sheriff in Wichita. He wanted to teach, but Friends did not offer Botany courses. He said:

I enrolled in a general botany course in Wichita and aced it! Nothing makes you feel prouder than getting A’s. So, I said, “maybe I can get a Masters in this.” But because I had more courses

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100 Ibid. From the academic support that was offered to him and the kinds of courses that were offered, Ridgeway held this belief.
Upon completing his Master of Science degree, the Biology Department at Kansas State University was in search of an instructor. Ridgeway applied and got the job. He stayed there for five years, and took an unpaid leave to work on his Doctorate in Zoology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Once completing his doctorate degree in 1963, he went back to Missouri for a year. Ridgeway speaks about times of segregation:

It was only about 12 years before I earned my doctorate that they even allowed blacks to enter. I started the University of Missouri to work on my Doctorate in 1963. I’m from Columbia Missouri, and while I was in graduate school my wife and three children were staying in Mexico, Missouri, 50 miles away from school. This was during the Kennedy-Johnson administration and integration was underway. In fact, my son and daughters were the first to attend that school in Missouri. It was a difficult time.

Upon graduation, he began to apply to various institutions across the nation. He had received offer letters from Arizona, California State University at Santa Barbara. In response to his thoughts about those offers he expressed, “I had thought about going to a smaller, but good college, a Liberal Arts College that had a graduate program…. …received an offer from the University of Nebraska, but I wanted something different.” He applied, and was hired, as the third African American professor at Eastern. Joining the faculty 1966, he remembers that year vividly:

This was a great year for Eastern’s history. Over 100-faculty members were hired and the school was expanding and growing by leaps and bounds.".... I was tired already from being that boy down the hall. They don’t say that (laughs), but I wanted a different environment. So I joined Eastern.

Ridgeway served as a professor in the Zoology department until 1995. Between 1971 and 1973 Ridgeway, he served as Director of the African American Studies Program.

His wife, Leta Ridgeway began serving as a reference librarian in the Booth Library shortly after his arrival to the university, until the time of her death in 2004. She

101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
is acknowledged in historian Don Tingley’s work on the history of Eastern. In recalling
the work of his wife at Eastern, Ridgeway acknowledged Tingley, speaking to his
scholarship, as one of the two pieces of comprehensive histories of the university.104 He
notes, “Good scholars try to see it as it is, and tells it as it is. Sometimes they don’t make
it. A good scholar always tries. He was a good scholar.”105 Ridgeway makes reference to
ability of Tingley to compile the most accurate history possible. Still, the voices of
students remain an absent factor throughout the text.

Ridgeway contributed greatly to the presence of Blacks at Eastern and in the
Charleston community. His collaboration and leadership with the initiation of the Afro-
American Studies Department, contribution in the Concerned Citizen’s Council and his
commitment to the success of Black students for nearly thirty years has definitely lefts
its’ mark. Officially, Ridgeway was a professor in Zoology and volunteered part-time
with the Office of Civil Rights. Now 87, he is noted as Professor Emeritus at Eastern
Illinois University and resides in Charleston, Illinois with his daughter Myra. While he
has endured some health challenges, he remains strong.106

Dr. Jimmie Lewis Franklin

104 Charles Coleman, Eastern Illinois State College Bulletin: Eastern Illinois State College-Fifty Years of
Public Service, (Charleston, IL: Eastern Illinois University), 1950. Donald F. Tingley, The Emerging
University, (Charleston, IL: Eastern Illinois University), 1974. Then Ogbomo’s (mentioned earlier) text in
2002.
105 Bill Ridgeway, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, January 21, 2010, transcript.
106 During my time at Eastern, I remember Ridgeway’s wife, Leta Ridgeway. While I didn’t meet
her personally many alumna sorority members would recall how she was instrumental person in the
continuation of many black organizations on campus, namely Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, a
public service sorority an organization, of which I am a member. They often contributed their rich legacy
of service to the Charleston community, particularly their involvement with black youth in the various
schools. Also, during my visit with Ridgeway he charged me to complete the document in enough time
that he could witness it. I recently called to check in with him and spoke with Myra while he was
napping; she mentioned how pleased he would be to know that this work would soon be complete. To
him, I owe great honor.
In April of 2010, after being connected through Dr. Ridgeway, I had an opportunity to visit Dr. Jimmie Franklin and his wife Golda in their Las Vegas home. Dr. Franklin offered vast amounts of information, some of which provided further insight into the things that were mentioned by Dr. Ridgeway.

Born and raised in Mississippi, Franklin attended Jackson State University on a basketball scholarship. He arrived at Jackson State in 1961 met and later married his wife, Golda. Franklin received both his Master of Arts degree and his Doctor of Philosophy degree in American History from the University of Oklahoma by 1967. Upon leaving Oklahoma, he worked his first job at Wisconsin State University. He stayed there three years and went to the University of Washington for one year, and began as a professor at Eastern in 1970. He also did a professorship at the University of Alabama and ended his career at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee where he started in 1986 and retired 2001. He also served as the president of the Southern Historical Association in 1993.


In my conversation with Franklin, he was relentless about contextualizing his path to Eastern. Many elements of his journey displayed the oftentimes-paradoxical nature of being a professor of color at an intense time in American history. At the height of the national movement regarding civil rights, the militancy on the part of various student groups left Franklin questioning his pedagogical impact. The political climate
proved to be a nemesis to his personal and professional progress; ultimately resulting in his departure from the University of Washington in Seattle.

Upon leaving Wisconsin State College\(^{107}\) at the start of 1970, it was done so with great hope and anticipation. The reputation of the history department of the University of Washington was quite favorable; however, Seattle was quite different for Franklin and his wife Golda. He explains:

"...It was a new setting for us, it was highly urban. The students were very aggressive, quite militant. For example, Seattle had one of the largest Black Panther Parties in the West. Well, you know we are from the South and we were accustomed to bigotry and terrible racism. And we had been, although we were students, we had been involved here and there with civil rights activities. But, I had never imagined, we never imagined, the militant urban blacks! And I guess maybe it was difficult for me to understand, not what they were after, but their techniques! Because we'd grown up in the King era, we had been involved in activities in the South where non-violent resistance was the key ingredient in reform. And it was very [unintelligible] confronting some students, and we would talk about violence when I would come against the notion that every single white person was evil, but I had knew better than that. But before then, I agreed with their discontent, that wasn’t the issue. It was the technique for reform that bothered me.\(^{108}\)

Soon, these “techniques” were evident all around campus and even in Franklin’s own classroom environment. Franklin shares:

"I had one student, [one of his graduate teaching assistants] her last name was McAlister. I never will forget that. She was a Panther. I don’t think she ever really appreciated being an assistant in the kind of African American history course that I taught. For example, I was far more committed than any of those students could ever imagine in trying to change America for the better. But I was also a professor who had a set of principles that told me that we had to deal with truth in the classroom. I mean my history podium was not a propaganda agency; I was a full professor. But, so, I think this girl probably never viewed me as being a real determined advocate for racial change. And rarely ever did she even speak to me, even though I was her boss. She was angry and mean. But then this one student came to me, he was an ‘A’ student. He was real distressed. He said to me, “I don’t know what’s wrong, I’m not doing well in my group. Although on the test, I’m doing okay. And I had been an ‘A’ student since high school. I can’t see to resonate with my group leader who is this woman McAlister.”

I tried, as much as I could, not to interfere with the graduate students who had these groups, it was their job because after all they were being trained as teachers. And I asked, “Well son, what do you think is a part of it?” He said, “Well Dr. Franklin, I really don’t know but here is what I think, when I was in high school I was in the Junior Black Panther Party. After a while I decided I didn’t need to be there because I believed in their efforts to free blacks from racial prejudice, but I didn’t quite agree with their techniques.” He believed the teaching assistant recognized him for exiting the Party, and as a result did not like him and was giving him C’s instead of his usual A’s. As the year progressed it didn’t get any better. Apparently there were two or three students in my class who were also Panthers..."

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\(^{107}\) This institution is currently called the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point.

\(^{108}\) Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
There were a few incidents. I remember this time; the lecture was on Phyllis Wheatley. And the point I was trying to make, was the same point any historian would make, that Phyllis Wheatley was not only a fine author, but that she emphasized Christianity in her writing a great deal. And I made this point almost as a side, only to get to the central point. The central point was that throughout our history as African Americans religion has been a central feature of that movement. Whether you’re talking about Martin Luther King Jr, Jesse Jackson or even Fredrick Douglass, Christianity had been the central role. I was lecturing on this particular theme, and three girls started talking. This was a 300-seat class. Finally, I asked if they had a question. They said, “Why do we have to talk about Christianity in this class.” I begin to explain it’s place in history, how Christianity was used as a weapon rather than to oppress as slaveholders used it. They continued interrupting. Evidently my answer didn’t satisfy them, and talking ensued. So finally, I said, the hell with it. Class dismissed. I went back to my office and contemplated, “Do I need this, do I really need this?”

The inability of some students to acquiesce to peaceful resistance began to frustrate Franklin, and while Franklin doesn’t characterize the conduct of the entire Panther party as negative, the presence of these three students, along with the negative experience with his graduate assistant, allowed him to reassess the efficacy of his own teaching content and pedagogy. During this time, for Franklin, things continued to worsen.

A few days later, this is when the Vietnam War is really raging and Nixon and Bobby and Cambodia were doing all kinds of crazy stuff. All students had declared a moratorium-no classes should be held, so forth and so on. This was in May, and coming to campus one day a student tried to stop me. I said, “Look, I realize you have this moratorium and I’ve been long opposed to the war and probably know more about why we should be opposed than you do, but I need to get to my office to get some materials,” and so forth and so on. So, I went to my office. In the meantime, things were pretty erupt on campus. These students were out there “liberating these buildings.” They were keeping people out and things. They came to my end of the building and I had locked the door because I hadn’t finished doing what I was doing. And they were out there banging on the door, banging on the door blah, blah, blah. They were really getting rough. About that time, my phone rang and this call was from a long time friend of mine, named Arlene Fowler. He taught the first black history courses at Eastern. But he called me and said “Jim what’s going on?” And I said, “Aw man, you don’t really want to know what’s going on!”” He said, “What’s the problem there? And I said, “It’s practically a riot in my building. These students are liberating the campus, the Vietnam War issues,” so forth and so on.” He said, “Well look, I will get back to you. I want to invite you over to speak.

We lived in Mississippi, so we knew what prejudice was like. I mean, hardcore prejudice. We were there in 64 when Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner[109] were murdered; we knew what prejudice was, but Seattle that year (shakes his head), that year in Seattle was the worse year in my entire life! I smoked and drank beer, not sure why my wife stayed with me. It was just like being traumatized. Each time, after the first two months or so of class, you had to look at your lecture [and ask yourself], “Will this intonation be right? Did I have my facts straight? Is my

[109] In 1964, both Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman were white men from New York who along with James Chaney a Black man, had worked with the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE). The three men went missing and later there shot and buried bodies were discovered together in Philadelphia, Mississippi. Ultimately of the 12 accused, three were charged. Neither served more than 6 years prison sentences—see www.core-online.org (http://www.core-online.org/History/goodman.htm) and www.history.com http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/slain-civil-rights-workers-found.
Students of all races and nationalities promulgated their cause, holding tightly to their political stances and were unflinching in their quest and method of freedom. Franklin, seemingly defeated, needed to make a decision about his future, and quickly. The call from Arlene Fowler at Eastern could not have been more propitious.

After accepting the first speaking engagement, Franklin was invited back to Eastern. With a salary that matched his needs, he was offered and accepted an invitation to become part of the faculty at Eastern. That year, 1970, he joined Eastern’s History Department, where he stayed for 16 years. In speaking about his time in Charleston with much passion and excitement, Franklin states, “I left the University of Washington and went to Eastern and haven’t regretted it since. I enjoyed working there. I enjoyed the climate. I enjoyed my department. I loved the students! To this very day, my favorite university is Eastern Illinois University!” In contrast to his time in Seattle, Franklin explained, “…no one was more in the battle and the fight for the rights of Black people than I was. I can be proud of the changes that were made there. We did help change Eastern. When I say we, I mean, Ridgeway, Jack Pullen the names, which should be central to your study.”

As the Affirmative Action Director, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) representative (from 1976-1986) and the advisor for many black student organizations, Franklin was critical in fracturing the formidable chains of resistance that Black students at Eastern confronted. Vestiges of Franklin’s influence are evident today, specifically in regards to the increased minority enrollment.

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110 Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
111 Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
Franklin’s presence at Eastern was critical to Blacks during the 70s and 80s. His forthright approach would prove beneficial as he challenged the policies and programming at Eastern. His work, coupled with the commitment to students was pivotal in opening access to more faculty of color, which in turn improved the experiences of Black students. In the next section I will introduce several Eastern Black, some of whom were instrumental in galvanizing change in with increased enrollment, curriculum changes and much more. As previously mentioned and listed in Table 2, Edgar Matthews Jr., Elmer “Jack” Pullen, Nathaniel Anderson, Marvinetta Woodley Penn, and Yvette Jackson-Moyo express memories of their collegiate years in an erudite manner. As a researcher and an alumna of Eastern Illinois, I marveled at the rich history I had been missing all along and developed a deeper appreciation of those who preceded me.

Edgar Matthews Jr.

Edgar Matthews Jr., 67, native of East St. Louis, IL attended EIU from September 1964 through May of 1969. He received his baccalaureate degree in Education in 1968 and one year later Matthews and his wife came to receive their Master of Arts degrees. He received his degree in Musical Performance and his wife, Elementary Education, both in 1969. Of the research participants, Matthews was the first to come to Charleston, Illinois. His experience as a student of music allowed him the opportunity to venture out into the Charleston area a bit more frequently than other students at that time of extreme segregation. Playing at various nightclubs and venues throughout the cities of Charleston and Mattoon, he was able to see and experience life outside of campus quite regularly. He recalled his original sentiments upon arriving to the city, stating, “Upon
arriving in Charleston, I was surprised to find that the city had a very southern, even confederate feeling about it. I lived with the only black family in Charleston, at the home of Ona & Kenneth Norton, Sr., at 103 W. Madison....” He continued, “It was quite different from what I was used to, but I learned to cope and get along quite well.”

Matthews was a charter member, as well as the only African American member, of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Music Fraternity. His experience in the music department was a good one. He loves music and ultimately loved the people and the organization in which he was a part. This organization [Phi Mu Alpha], “Strives to advance the course of music in America, foster mutual welfare and brotherhood of students of music, and encourage loyalty to the Alma Mater.”

Elmer Marie “Jack” Pullen

Elmer Marie Pullen, affectionately known as “Jack” has been a researchers’ dream come true. His relational nature connected me with more than half of my research participants; his encyclopedic mind has been a goldmine. The ability to provide a recapitulation for nearly every person and event mentioned in the literature (history) was almost unbelievable, as demonstrated in the examples in the upcoming section of this text.

Pullen, a native of Cairo, Illinois enrolled in Eastern during the fall of 1967 as an undergraduate student. After high school, he attended a community college in Paducah, Kentucky for a short while before being drafted into the Vietnam War. He was stationed in Europe for 18-months and came to Eastern directly following. Although his experience was a bit untraditional compared to the average 18-year-old

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112 Edgar Matthews, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 21, 2013, transcript.
113 Ibid.
student, at 21 ½ years old, Pullen was focused and ready to succeed. Upon entering the campus, though drastically different from his home environment, he felt a sense of familiarity because of his exposure to Eastern during a trip with his friend Val Bush in 1963.

Schooled in a one-room schoolhouse during his elementary and middle school days, by family who were educators, Pullen is the only person of his 24 high school classmates to earn a college degree. In fact, he earned two of them. While at Eastern, in 1970 he earned his degree in Sociology and in 1973 he completed his Master of Science degree in Student Personnel and Higher Education awarded by the Guidance and Counseling Department.

While at Eastern, he was a founding member of the Afro-American Association (AAA), a member of the Veteran’s Association, and took a lead role in the improvement of black life. Upon graduation, Pullen worked for the State of Illinois for six months, and returned to Eastern to work as a Financial Aid Adviser. He retired in 2002.

During our meeting, Pullen spoke favorably of the university, but when considering that he has spent half of his life at Eastern in the same position without promotion, he states the following:

Let me say this, I came in 1970 [to work] and retired in 2002. [32 years!] I never was promoted. I don’t know if it was political. I didn’t have a good taste in my mouth about that, but I hope that it didn’t effect my trying to help the students. I told my son, if you haven’t moved the way you should, perhaps it time to move on.

I was never one to be a “yes” man and I think maybe sometimes that might have hurt me in terms of promotion. But in terms of doing what I did as being the correct thing to do, and being able to look in the mirror in the morning and say, “I ain’t bit no dust,” this isn’t clear then I can look at myself and know that.”

Just to give you an example, Dr. Franklin was a friend of mine. I remember when I said they got me too cheap? Dr. Franklin realized that and due to his contacts, they gave me an increase one time. And there were some people in my department that did not like the fact that I got an increase, and I think they carried that against me.

“My wife got a job, and she did well on her job and she received promotions. My children did well, and I had a lot of good relationships. But professionally, I think it would have been to my advantage to have moved on. But I didn’t and after spending a certain number of years here, 32
to be exact, I am now able to help my dad, and helped my mother before she passed away, and help my wife’s father. So, that’s the way the cookie crumbles (laughs)... makes you a stronger person.”

I met Pullen during my tenure at Eastern from 1997-2001. Pullen has always maintained a positive attitude and a helpful spirit. His ability to navigate the terrain of Eastern in a pleasant way was evident in his interactions. Therefore, despite the lack of value awarded monetarily, his value among the black students still rings true in conversation among friends and fellow alumni today.

Of all participants, Pullen spent the longest time at the University, from 1967 until 2002. As an undergraduate, then a graduate student and ultimately a Financial Aid Officer, during this 35-year period Pullen witnessed a lot, much of it he is able to particularize almost immediately. Currently, he and his wife, Sarah Frances Pullen, are retired and reside in Cairo, Illinois.

_Nathaniel Anderson_

Nathaniel James Anderson, 63, of East St. Louis, attended Eastern from June of 1970 until December of 1973 as an undergraduate student. He later returned, from 1976-77, to earn a Master of Arts degree in Education from.

Although Anderson was quite accomplished at the institution, Eastern was not originally part of his plan; in fact, he was headed to Tennessee State on an athletic scholarship. However, that all changed during one summer, when his friend Victor Brook came home after completing a year at Eastern and complained of how lonely he had been. Brook advised Anderson to take a look at the school. Already accepted at TSU, Anderson changed his plans, and started at Eastern in the fall of 1970 after never having visited the campus.

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114 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
Once acclimated to the campus Anderson was involved in the Black Student Union\textsuperscript{115} as well as Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated. One of Anderson’s biggest accomplishments happened on the field; the football field. Many would agree with the following:

Probably the brightest star on the [football] team was Nate Anderson, a slick-running halfback who gained small college All-American Honorable Mention honors. Anderson carried the ball 261 times for 1,255 yards while crossing the goal line 10 times.\textsuperscript{116}

When asked about his overall success as Eastern, Anderson contributed it to sports. Speaking of the impact of sports, he stated, “It served me some name recognition. I was successful on the football field and I sort of parlayed that into relationships with the people I knew on campus. Because I had spent time with people who I knew that were good friends before I was significantly good at sports. I was good at it, but I didn’t have the recognition. And then once I made all-American a couple of years that just gave me more, campus wide everybody noticed me. I like that.”

Anderson’s “star” performance at Eastern did not end at sports, Anderson was appointed to the Board of Trustees in 1996. In 1999 he was reappointed to a six-year team. In 2001 he was elected chair of the Board. To date, as a ‘career educator’ Anderson spent thirty plus years as a principal of schools in Decatur and in Rock Island, Illinois schools. He currently serves as an adjunct professor at Lindenwood University in Saint Charles, Missouri.

\textit{Marvinetta (Woodley) Penn}

Marvinetta Woodley-Penn is the sole reason I attended Eastern. In high school I was an above average student, but because my family did not have any funds saved for

\textsuperscript{115} Formerly Afro-American Association
\textsuperscript{116} Eastern Illinois University 1973 Warbler, 72
college, the prospect of attending an institution of higher learning was not immediately within my view. By my junior year though, I had met Marvinetta, and soon the realization of attending college became achievable.

Woodley-Penn, 60, of East St. Louis, attended Eastern from August of 1971 until May of 1974 as an undergraduate student. Just two months earlier, her mother had been killed in a car accident and had recently given birth to her only son, Marco. Leaving her son to be raised by her Aunts, Woodley-Penn’s main goal was to start fresh and new again.

As an English and a Theatre major, Woodley-Penn would begin to create her new start through her creative expression in plays, and perusing course textbooks. She loved to read, and though presented with many academic challenges, contributes this love for learning to her success now and in the classroom as an educator.

During our interview she reveals a startling epiphany reflecting on her time and involvement in theatre while at Eastern, and those who were critical to her experience. She states:

But there were several professors, all of them were white and all of them were men. It was weird to me that it’s always been the men who have always been influential in my growth and development. And it really pisses me off that it’s been the men who were influential, and all white men.”

In high school, in junior high school, the ones who told me I could act, who gave me parts in plays, who took me on the road—all white men. And that’s a damn shame. Oh sorry!117

Woodley-Penn’s frustration has been used positively as she currently serves as Executive Director for Global Girls Inc., an organization geared towards uplifting and motivating girls in inner city Chicago, Illinois. Global Girls uses the performing arts to deal with complex and delicate issues such as teen pregnancy, abortion, AIDS

117 Marvinetta Woodley Penn, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
awareness and suicide. Her passion for nurturing others’ gifts and talents, as many Eastern professors nurtured hers, is now her life’s mission.

_Yvette (Jackson) Moyo_

Yvette (Jackson) Moyo is a 60 year-old Chicago native. Jackson-Moyo\textsuperscript{118} attended Eastern from May of 1971 through May of 1974 as an undergraduate student. She and Woodley-Penn, along with another friend, Leslye Logan, made a pact to graduate together in three years. They each achieved their goal.

Jackson--Moyo was an African American Studies major and a theatre minor while at Eastern, and was intricately involved in campus life. She was president of the Black Student Union, and a permanent member of the University Board and the Student Senate. The University Board acts as fiduciary board making financial allocations for cultural and musical events held on campus, including cost and fees for speakers. Student Senate is the student ran the governing legislative body of the university. She kept busy, along with the obligation of being a member of a performing arts group called _Images in Ebony_,\textsuperscript{119} as well as an Alpha Angel.\textsuperscript{120}

Constant in the realm of leadership, Jackson--Moyo created a black newspaper called _Ujamaa Uhuru_, which means black family in Swahili. When asked about the supportive nature of Dr. Ridgeway and Dr. Franklin, Jackson--Moyo states, “because I was doing all the stuff, I would always get a thumbs up and positive reinforcement from them. That kept me going!”

\textsuperscript{118} Yvette’s last name is not hyphenated but in order to identify her with maiden name while she was at Eastern I wanted to include both names to ensure accuracy of identity.

\textsuperscript{119} Jackson--Moyo appears in one of the _Images in Ebony_ productions 1973 Warbler Yearbook.

\textsuperscript{120} Alpha angels were a support arm to male fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.
At present, Jackson--Moyo works as a Social Entrepreneur in her hometown of Chicago, Illinois. She has both a for-profit firm and a not-for-profit corporation, of which she is Executive Director.
CHAPTER 4

KING’S DEATH, BLACK STUDENT LIFE AT EIU, and PRESIDENT DOUDNA

Transition to Charleston

*If history is to have any meaning ... it shows us that normal everyday human beings once went beyond what they thought they could be to achieve something and improve life for us all.*

- Giovanni, Poet/Activist

This chapter presents an introduction of Black life at Eastern at a time when the country was experiencing great turmoil due to the assassination of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His death proved to be the catalyst that influenced a shift in black student life. This chapter discusses some of the preliminary happenings during 1968-1970.

In August of 1997, my seventeen-year-old self had been transported to Charleston, Illinois to attend college. The first to leave home for school, the event marked a major transition in my life. Adjusting to collegiate life offers a multiplicity of challenges. From selecting roommates, dealing with a new level of independence, and figuring out life without much guidance, coupled with selecting a course of study are expected responsibilities for all students. However, for myself and many other Black students who enroll at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) these obstacles, along with achieving academic success are not the only concerns; learning to survive in an environment that is often hostile and resistant to your very presence becomes a major problem with which to grapple as well.

Some of the research participants share their introductions to Charleston; as most\(^\text{121}\) came from urban cities where the populations were practically all Black. They

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\(^{121}\) All students that were interviewed with the exception of Elmer Pullen came from mostly Black schools and communities prior to attending Eastern. Elmer was born and reared in southern Illinois-
bring forth the following in regards to Charleston:

Yeah, I had never seen so much corn and fields in my life. I grew up in East St. Louis so I’m an urban student, you know, a city boy. ... There were a lot of things new [in Charleston]... the whites were more skeptical or apprehensive. It was more, they were wondering who we were. We were almost like invaders. It was Charleston! They ain’t experience no black folk, if they could put a fence around the campus and kept us here, they would have. But we were all over this town. You know, eating food, doing everything we needed to do. Buying food at the grocery store or whatever...”

The experience of coming to Charleston as described by Dr. Anderson’s was not unique to him. Matthews, a student musician explained it in this way:

Living in Charleston was what I imagined living in the South might be like. The people who lived in Charleston, Black students called it Charley-town, were proud of the fact that they had fought on the Confederate side during the Civil War. I did not have any serious run ins with the people of Coles County, but I always knew where I was and how they felt about black folks, especially “uppity” black folks trying to get an education. I worked in a wide variety of venues while attending EIU, where I played trumpet and bass to earn extra income. I’ve worked many a “Moose Club” and VFW and when some of the attendees got a drink or two under their belt, they didn’t mind telling you how they really felt about things.

Like, Matthews, Yvette -Moyo-Jackson felt the same vibe of what it meant to be Black in Charleston. When asked about her experience in Charleston, she said:

“Charleston? Oh man. You’re a suspect, you know, not a prospect but a suspect. Like when I went into the store... everybody that enters a store is a prospect, a prospective buyer. And I was treated like a suspect. It was definitely different. ... I really didn’t venture into Charleston much other than to have to purchase items for a party or dance bi-culturally, a new dance you got to get a new outfit and we did find the places with style. But again, part of the culture shock here (Eastern) even with the dress was totally different.”

Leaving the comforts of their homes, these students made major adjustments to become citizens of Charleston. Becoming more conscious of their public conversations, curtailing their diets, and many for the first time became more aware about what it meant to be Black in America; and in the small town of Charleston.

Cairo, IL. Perhaps his ability to navigate the terrain of Eastern so effectively was impacted by his experience in a nearly all white environment early in life.

122 Nathaniel Anderson, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
123 Edgar Matthews, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 20, 2013, transcript.
124 Yvette Jackson-Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
Campus Life

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 made way for an increasing numbers of Black students at predominantly white universities. With assistance from educational pioneers like Silas Purnell, Black students were charged with leaving their places of comfort and familiarity to transition into a place where they would be committed to study in order to obtain a better life, a better future. Black students traded their homes in, East St. Louis and St. Louis and later Chicago for those in Charleston, Illinois and Eastern’s campus. Things were different for them. The adjustments were major.

Eastern Illinois University was chartered by the Illinois General Assembly in 1895 and first opened its doors in 1899. Several decades would pass before the influx of Blacks into Eastern. Acquiring full university status just ten years prior, it was not until 1967 when a sizable number of Blacks attended. The increase in their presence at Eastern would present a challenge to the traditional climate of the university and stretch the administration and student body in new ways. Hence, this adjustment process was dualistic in that the Black students adjusted, but the administrations and white students had to make adjustments as well. -Moyo Jackson, speaks of some adjustments that occurred, she said:

I knew it was a pretty place but I didn’t know it was in the country. My initial thoughts, you know like, this is a whole different culture. They ate different foods.

The things was served in the lunchroom were different. White gravy. There are certain things that you do to gravy so ensure that its brown. Food, your music… there were not radio stations… we brought down a lot of that stuff to have our culture be present.

This importation of Black culture was essential for students and many times would not

125 Some of the first black students in the history of the university were Zella Powell, first documented graduate in 1910, Bernice Gray 1928, Caption Charles Blakely Hall attended Eastern from 1938-1941.
126 Yvette Jackson--Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
Contrary to what Brian Clardy reports in his unpublished dissertation\textsuperscript{127} that examined the management of student activism during the 1970 Kent State protests among seven Illinois institutions (including Eastern), Eastern’s students influenced major change. Clardy sought out several archival sources and also infused his research with interviews. One of his interviewees, Eastern Professor Terry Weidner describes the campus climate at Eastern in 1970. Weidner states, “My recollection is that the protest at Eastern were relatively peaceful and quiet and, as has always been the case here, did not involve a majority of students, who were apparently doing things more important to them at the time.”\textsuperscript{128} While Weidner’s interpretation alongside various documents issued by the Office of the President aids Clardy to conclude that the climate at Eastern was always ideal and peaceful, with regard to Black students, there are other sources and participants that conclude otherwise. While the climate was free of “riotous behaviors” and looting, there were many turbulent patches that existed and much resistance to the status quo on the part of Black students. They used their voices (and sometimes their bodies) to force change.

White English professor and historian Roger Whitlow highlights major aspects of student life for Blacks at Eastern during 1949-1974. Whitlow speaks to some experiences of Blacks during that time. He states:

\begin{quote}
Among the many new students on Eastern’s campus in the late sixties were more than 200 who were black, and their presence put the attitudes of the University and in the town of Charleston to an even greater test. In 1949-50, there were six black students on campus; by 1973-74, there were approximately 425. …By the close of the sixties, more than forty percent of Eastern’s student still came from eighteen neighboring counties, and most of those students had never had any encounter with blacks.” Joining with the problem of racial inexperience of white downstate students was the generally militant attitude of many urban blacks students who, in tune with
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{128} Ibid. P. 103.
national attitudes, preferred much of the time to remain among themselves.\textsuperscript{129}

Here Whitlow goes on to state, “...in spite of a general defensiveness among many blacks and whites, however, race relations proceeded tolerably enough, expect for occasional incidents.”\textsuperscript{130} He begins to highlight these occasions. The first incident Whitlow highlights is in 1969. However, there are a few other instances prior to 1969 that are critical to the later experiences of Black students in Charleston and precipitated their actions.

By 1967, there were 35 Black students at Eastern. Their sparse presence would ignite a movement that was typical for schools around the nation. The collaboration between students and administrators were critical in determining the success of students transitioning from larger cities to the small town of Charleston. Quincy Van Ogden Doudna would play a vital role during in the lives of Black students at Eastern.

\textit{President Quincy Doudna}

Quincy Van Ogden Doudna was the third president of Eastern Illinois University. Doudna was noted in his ability for expansion, starting with 2, 282 students as Eastern Illinois State Teachers College, 15 years later Doudna would transform the institution into a university, nearly quadrupling the enrollment to 8, 652.\textsuperscript{131} Student enrollment increased, but the size of the institution physically rose as well. Celebrated as the “builder,” by the time of Doudna’s retirement more than 35 major buildings on the 316 acres of the main campus had materialized and much more was underway.\textsuperscript{132}

Doudna’s tenure as president was during some very critical years, from 1956-

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{129} Roger Whitlow, \textit{A Quarter Century of Student Life}, in Donald F. Tingley, (ed.) \textit{The Emerging University: A History of Eastern Illinois University, 1949-1974}, Charleston, IL, Eastern Illinois University, 1974, 89
\item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{131} \textit{Chicago Tribune}. Ex-College President Doudna. e. April 22, 1987.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Donald Tingley, \textit{The Emerging University}, 72.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
1971. Considering the racial climate of our nation, Doudna endured great challenges in the city of Charleston and Eastern’s campus as it increased the number of Black students who would attend.

Just ten days following the State of the Union address issued by President Lyndon Johnson, Doudna delivers the State of the University address at Eastern on January 20, 1967. As Johnson outlined the conflict in Vietnam and the plans of waging war on poverty, Doudna reports of advancements made at the Eastern on the part of the faculty, staff and students. He captured with great zeal the essence of the students and the feel of the university’s climate, one that was flourishing. In regards to students, the enrollment numbers had increased by 8.5%. While some students had dropped out for various reasons, overall things were increasingly getting better. In 1960, only 68 percent of the student body was from the top half of their high school classes, that year (1967) 92.4 percent of the students admitted for the fall quarter were from the top half of their high school graduating classes. The increased caliber of students, Doudna felt contributed to the many compliments that he received from multiple employers and campus guest regarding the “certain touch of dignity” they possessed. By the end of the school year, May of 1967 Doudna expressed sentiments that were favorable. He stated in one of his radio addresses that, "In many ways we have had an excellent year. I feel the spirit has been better this year than in many others. Negative influences that have sometimes been so obvious has been minimal or missing. Student leadership has been responsible leadership." Doudna here could have possibly been referring to the various campus protests regarding the Vietnam War and other political factions that

133 State of the University Address, by President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, January 20, 1967. Faculty Speech. 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Doudna Speeches), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P.2
The Death of a King, 1968

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a symbol of hope for many in America. His strategy of peace was attractive to many national leaders, especially in a time of extreme violence. However, near the end of this life many of his messages begin to challenge America on the front of human rights and dignity. On the day following one of these reverberating messages—*I’ve Been To the Mountain Top*, civil rights and spiritual leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. The death of Dr. King riveted the nation and impacted Eastern’s campus and community as well. The aftermath of King’s death would impact students around the nation and those at Eastern. Much of what manifested during this period would prove to lay the foundation for Blacks students for generations to come.

Of my research participants, Edgar Matthews was the first to attend Eastern beginning in 1964. One month prior to Matthews’ graduation on 1968, Dr. King was killed. It marked a pivotal point in Matthews’ life and Eastern’s campus. Matthews recalls this time:

I can’t remember whether it was morning or afternoon when I heard the news of Dr. King’s assassination, but I was driving my 1962 Chevy when I heard the news on the radio and I pulled over to the side of the road to contemplate what his death would mean to us [Blacks]. I wasn’t an active member of the civil rights movement, being a minority student at a university in Charleston, Illinois, but I was very emotionally involved with our struggle and tried to stay abreast of what was going on at the time. Losing Dr. King was a major blow to our people in our fight for equal rights, and I remember vividly the nightly news stories detailing the burning of cities like Detroit and Los Angeles in response to his death.135

135 Edgar Matthews, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 20, 2013, transcript.
Matthews understood that impact of King’s death nationally but locally he did not recall much happening at the time and instead focused on those places that received major radio and media coverage. However, though unaware to Matthews, Charleston had its share of concerns following King’s assassination. President Doudna revealed much detail regarding the aftermath in Charleston following King’s death. Just four months following the assassination Doudna recalls:

At about 11:10 p.m. on April 4, 1968, the day of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, I had an anonymous telephone call. The lady said something about being “a Southern white woman” and asked me if I thought we would “have any trouble with these Negro students.” I said, “About what?” She said, “On account of the assassination of Martin Luther King.” I told her that I was sure there would be no trouble whatever; that these were “good kids,” and I was sure she should not worry.\footnote{Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence August 12, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association”), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.}

Doudna got off the phone that night, but the next morning Doudna received a call from a parent of one of the “negro” students. The mother, noticeably upset, spoke with great detail to Doudna. Doudna tells of that conversation:

She said the call came from a woman with a "Southern accent" who had said, "Don't you Negroes start anything around here or we'll take care of you," or words to that general effect. The mother did not say what time the call came, but sometime during the night the daughter had called her mother. She mentioned some other unpleasant happenings to her daughter during the year but did not go into detail. I told her I was very distressed but that I could not do anything about the anonymous call. She wondered if she should take her daughter out of school. I told her that I thought her daughter was just as safe here as she would be in her hometown. The mother disagreed, saying that at home there were so many Negroes that they were not noticed. I told her that I would call her daughter and try to reassure her. I had a long talk with the daughter in my office shortly after talking with the mother. She told me about the anonymous call and about prowlers in the area and the times they had called the police, etc. She said once they called some friends from a residence hall to come.\footnote{Ibid.}

While Matthews did not recall any experiences surrounding the death of King on campus, these two unnamed female students who attended Eastern and lived in the Charleston community were threatened with phone calls just hours following the senseless shooting. It is not known how this woman with the “southern accent” obtained the numbers of these students or how many other students experienced these
same threats. At any rate, receiving a call of this nature had the potential to be psychologically, damaging to say the least. It was not reported whether the “two girls” mentioned by Doudna, stayed or left the university or whether or not the lady caller with the “southern accent” made good on any of their threats.

In all, it was critical to have mothers who proactively supported their daughters, which in turn forced the school administration to handle the matter immediately. Doudna seemed to handle the matter as best as he could at the time giving the limited information he obtained. After meeting with both students who expressed their concern about “prowlers” in the area near their homes, Doudna spoke to the Mayor of Charleston to have more lighting put outside their apartments. According to Doudna, the lights were put up within 24-hours of the original request.

Friday, the night following the assassination, a group held a memorial in the Library lecture hall on campus in honor of Dr. King. Once university officials got word of the memorial, Doudna made plans to attend the event. With about 50-75 people in attendance, including campus ministers, after moments of silence Dr. Parviz Chahbazi, Head of the Psychology Department, gave the first speech. According to Doudna in regards to Chahbazi’s speech, he states, “The burden of his talk was that he was "just as guilty as the man who pulled the trigger" because he had "failed to speak out against injustice…" 138 Chahbazi’s, a Quaker, opening set the tone for the rest of the evening. Many students and staff spent a few hours discussing the continuing problems that existed for minorities and whether or not the non-violent tactics used by King were effective. Filled with emotion and frustration, overall, Doudna suggested that the meeting was peaceable and calm. Doudna gave the concluding speech. He reflected on

138 Ibid. 4.
how his primary intent was to “counter the utter hopelessness that seemed so evident among the students.” He further elaborated about how great the humanitarian King was and concluded by giving the student body who were present a charge to continue King’s work.

On the day of King’s funeral, Tuesday, April 9th, a group of Black students hoped to be excused from class. Approaching Doudna in his office the day before, he granted their request. However, there were many who opposed his choice to only excuse the Black students from class and not the entire student body, calling it “discrimination in reverse.” After the many calls of disapproval, Doudna wrote a statement explaining his choice and read it on the radio. This handwriting statement was salvaged in the archives. He states:

Several students have called this evening to inquire about my having granted Negro students permission to be absent from classes Tuesday. I have tried to explain my decision as well as possible in each case. No explanation of this decision is completely satisfactory, even to me. Neither would any explanation of a decision not to have granted the permission be satisfactory if I had decided negatively. It was a hard decision and I did what I thought was right.

Some have asked if this is not discrimination in reverse. I agree that it is. On this score, I make no apology, although I should tell you that at least one Negro student raised the same question with me and I am sure was distressed that there was a probability of the decision being so regarded.

I want to make clear that whatever discrimination our Negro students may have suffered that might seem to warrant special consideration on this tragic occasion I can only compliment Eastern students in general for the way they have carried on their relationships with each other through the years.  

Doudna would spend time here explaining his role, the rules of the university regarding students and activities, and ultimately hoped that everyone would understand this position in allowing this excusal of class for the Black students. Weeks later another group planned a program where speeches of Kings’, prayer and other activities were planned. Following the program Doudna invited the group of Black students...

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139 Ibid. P 6. In the transcribed version of this note is a slightly different than the original one written in black ink. The only difference that I want to notate is that everywhere the word “negro” is written it is done so in lowercase. However, on second look of the note, in blue ink the lowercase n is crossed out and replaced by a capital N. I’m not sure if this was “corrected” after having it proofed or it.
students to his home congratulating them on a job well done. Doudna noted that the
dinner at his home was filled informal with conversation but they “did not discuss
racial problems.”¹⁴⁰ I am not certain as to why he noted the fact that “racial problems”
were not discussed, but the coming weeks would make up for the lost time concerning
racial conversations. In any case, students were ready to start a movement.

The Issuance of Demands

Elmer Pullen, graduate student in 1967, was apart of this small yet powerful
group that were extremely active and interacted greatly with Doudna at this time. He
was one of the students who visited Doudna’s home and was instrumental in
advocating on the part of Black students at Eastern. Pullen remembered the days and
weeks following King’s murder and how it propelled he and a group of students in a
grassroots movement to start an student led organization, the Afro-American
Association (AAA). It was May of 1968, he states:

We started this organization in Apt #13 in University Apartments. I never will forget (laughs). The guy and his wife that lived there, was Harold Holly—Harold “Gus” Holly. Harold played on
the football team. A group of us students got together along with a guy named Ernie Morris and we met in Gus’ his apartment. Gus is his nickname. Harold is his full name. Harold Holly. And we talked about things that were going on at Eastern and came up with the organization. We had a president. The first president was Bill Wooten. By the way, Bill was the first student black student to get a Masters degree in the school of Business at here. He was from East St. Louis. There was a young lady name Sandra King, she was the secretary, I was the vice-president and I
and I can’t remember who the treasurer was but we met in Harold’s apartment, #13 can you
imagine that? (Laughs). And we came up with some suggestions and ideas and we presented
them to the administration.

… I think there were maybe 5 or 6. Back then they weren’t called not requests, but demands. Ok?¹⁴¹

Before the members of AAA reached Doudna he had received rumors about the list of
demands by a call from “a man downtown” and he also received notice from the editor

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 8.
¹⁴¹ Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
of the student newspaper, which confirmed the rumors. Perturbed, Doudna recommended that the Dean speak with some of the “mature Negro students” to substantiate this claim. Upon substantiation, Doudna again met with the editor and spoke with him about how “unethical” it was for the students to submit a copy of the demands to the newspaper before he viewed it. The next morning, May 9th, the press waited outside Doudna’s office to see if the Blacks students would show up, but they did not. About 15 minutes after the scheduled 10 o’clock meeting time a male student (I would surmise this student was Bill Wooten, president of the AAA) arrived at Doudna’s office alone. He agreed to speak privately and made Doudna aware that the rest of the group would join him once the press has dispersed. Doudna agreed to a 5 o’clock time and that the time would be kept confidential.

However, about 11 o’clock, a graduate student member of the AAA, Ernest Morris, barged past the secretary into Doudna’s office requesting a meeting. Doudna was not able to meet with him until 11:55 a.m. During this meeting Morris presented the official list of demands to Doudna. Doudna was not expecting the list until later that evening, but was informed by Morris that what he carried was the finalized list. After a 45 minute meeting Morris and Doudna agreed on a press release that would be issued to the local papers regarding the issue at hand. The statement from the Office of the President reads as follows:

About a month ago, at the time of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., I talked personally, at some length, with several Negro students, either individually or in a small group. I told them at that time that if they had any problems that I did not know about and that were in my power to solve, I wanted them to come to see me. I said it was obvious that I could not solve any problems I did not know about and I pointed out that some problems relate to persons or agencies outside my jurisdiction or influence.

Mr. Ernest Morris, a graduate student from Chicago, representing other Negro students, has now brought to my attention the following specific policies the Negro students hope will be affirmed and implemented:

1. Opening of all approved university housing to black students, or the removal of the same from the approved housing list.
2. The opening of all fraternities and sororities to black students or removal from the university campus of those who refuse to comply

3. Increased financial aid for black students

4. Recruitment of more black students.

5. Recruitment of more black staff members by advertising vacancies at Negro colleges and universities.

6. Negro history and cultural courses in the curriculum.

Most of the problems enumerated have been matters of concern by the University for many years, but they have not been completely solved and do not lend themselves to easy solution. The University is committed to continued and increased efforts to find solutions.

I have always taken the position that any student has a right and an obligation to come to me with problems he thinks I can help solve if he has had difficulty getting them taken care of elsewhere.

The response of students today is in harmony with the spirit with which we attempt to maintain student administrative relationships at Eastern Illinois University.

Pullen recalled that time with specificity, “we went to the administration with these demands. At the time Dr. Quincy Van Ogden Doudna was the president and we were able to get him to take some action.” Actions moved along rather quickly. The following week in consultation with Morris, Doudna agreed to develop several subcommittees based on each listed demand to have three students work alongside two administrators on each area of concern. Doudna obtained a copy of an official agreement between the Afro-American Student Union and administrators at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. This nine-page document outlined

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142 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association”), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. These demands were very poignant but much less extensive in comparison to the thirty-five demands issued on the part of the Black Students Association at the University of Illinois just forty-five minutes away, as listed in Joy Williamson’s work -Black Power on Campus pp. 146-148. There is however another source that lists forty-one demands instead-
http://archives.library.illinois.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/416840_6_BlackStudentsAssoc.pdf
University of Illinois, Student Organizations Publications, 1871-, Record Series 41/6/840, Box 6, Black Students Association. Granite, at the University of Illinois during this time there was more of a force of students, in 1967 there were approximately 300 Blacks compared to the 35 Blacks at Eastern so the level of input was seemingly greater.


144 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General
their strategic plan to increase the amount of Blacks students at Northwestern as well as several retention strategies. It served as a template for Doudna regarding committee development and possible strategies for discussion and tackling issues at Eastern.

Shortly after Morris’ meeting with Doudna, a correspondence regarding deadlines and such were sent to the students that Morris recommended for these committees. There were also notices sent to each the twelve faculty/administrators that made up the other portion of the committee. Doudna devised a five-point plan of sorts that would guide the structure of each committee report. Each demand of concerns would report: 1) the current status of the issue at hand, 2) the actions recommended by the committee in whole, 3) the actions recommended by the committee in part, 4) the actions recommended by the President after the study of the report and 5) the special responsibilities on the part of Black students. Of this plan, the students were the only ones who had “special responsibilities.”

Once the meetings were underway, tensions grew between the dean, the administrators and students. Doudna spoke about how one student asked, “Why had this not been done before?” Originally the question was received as rhetorical but as discussions ensued, Doudna later reflected on the question. He stated:

...We are making no claim here to being 'holy' in these matters. We recognize fully that there are some things we might have done that we have not done. We have consistently spoken of 'continued but increased' efforts being necessary.” I tried to make the point that it would serve little purpose to analyze the past with regard to our activities but would serve better purpose to

Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. Agreement Between Afro-American Student Union and FMO and a committee representing the Northwestern University Administration was connection one of the only piece of correspondences in Doudna’s file that suggested the link between Universities statewide. This was sent to Doudna. Date May 4, 1968. 44-52.

145 Students named to the committees were: John Beard, Morris Brown, Eddie Stephens, Sandra King, Leslie Stewart, Andrea Baker, Gerald Bennet, Birch Jones, Dorothy Simmons of Chicago; Hazel Thomas, William Wooten, Gregory Crocket of East St. Louis; George Wilson of Springfield; Patricia Brown of Argo; Lillie Mann, Olivia Taylor of Decatur; Clarence Whaley of Maywood; and George Mouzon of Stanford, Connecticut.

146 Ibid.
This sentiment of progressiveness seemingly provided the momentum to actively address the issues that AAA presented to him. Acknowledgement (hopefully not excusal) of the past, yet the welcoming the possibilities of the future through the activism on the part of AAA was commendable. In all, Doudna states:

I felt at the time, and still do, that in spite of my belief that most of us, and perhaps all of us, in responsible positions here have been deeply concerned about problems of black people in general, and black students in particular, we had not fully realized the nature of these problems and how deeply black students feel about some of the issues that were presented to us.

The collective action and initiation on the part of the Black student groups seemed to serve as a true catalyst for change especially in regards to the university’s administration. At least from the conversation and documentations, when students or staff of color expressed concerns typically they were addressed directly or indirectly.

The grassroots efforts by the AAA in University Apartment #13 would set the stage of a new relationship between the Black student body and the university administration. These efforts in 1968 were essential in establishing a respected voice on the part of Black students that in turn created a sense of Black culture and Black life at Eastern Illinois University. As Doudna also expressed, these deliberations would also serve as a tool to enlighten many of the past administrative leaders at Eastern that would ignite them to implement change.

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147 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P. 16.
148 Ibid.
CHAPTER 5
BLACK STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT EASTERN, 1967-1975

Demanding More

This chapter highlights major happenings at Eastern from 1967-1975 with regards to the Black student population, both on the campus and within the community. Students and administrators seemingly worked diligently to maintain a supportive and communicative rapport. The effectiveness of their relationship remained critical to the advancement of unity among the races and acceptance by the community of Charleston and campus of Eastern. The birth of this relationship became evident with the issuance of the demands on the part of AAA. As mentioned the demands centered on increasing black student recruitment, increasing black faculty recruitment, implementing a black studies curriculum, establishing criteria for fraternal organization, and improving financial aid and fair housing.

Black Student Recruitment

Three of the demands took priority: recruitment of Black students, increased number of Black faculty and staff and the implementation of a curriculum that more squarely reflected Black history. I present each of the six demands but provide more thorough information regarding the three aforementioned ones, as they have the most comprehensive archival data available.

By July of 1968, two months after the demands were originally presented, Doudna answered three of the demands.149 The first issue in subcommittee was the increase of Black enrollment. Unlike special efforts that existed at neighboring

institutions like the University of Illinois,\textsuperscript{150} no concerted effort to recruit Black students was made. Doudna spoke about this, he states, “...it is apparent that no special effort has been made to recruit black students.” I am not sure why this was necessarily noted or why there had been no effort. However, a long-time policy of Eastern, according to Doudna were that recruitment efforts were done only in inner city schools and downstate schools that had at least ten students already representative at the institutions.\textsuperscript{151} In many ways this seemed oxymoronic. How is collegiate representation of a particular high school supposed to reach ten if no recruitment effort is made at the outset? The classic “chicken or the egg” debate seemed to be the fundamental question here. If recruitment of Black students were the priority, the active participation of administration in order to implement strategies seemed necessary. Here, according to these presidential papers and other archival data there was no action recommended by the committee as a whole.

However, part of the committee thought that the institution “should commit itself to have no less than 150 Negro students in the fall of 1968 and 200 by the winter quarter.”\textsuperscript{152} This time frame proved to be unrealistic considering the time of the report was issued, June of 1968, and fall deadlines for admissions had passed or were nearing. One of two administrators that sat on this committee made his research findings known. With regards to admissions and recruitment of Blacks, in a few letters of correspondence with Doudna, Vice President of Administration William H. Zeigel

\textsuperscript{150} Project 500- The Special Educational Opportunities Program in 1968. Or even the advancements of integration with schools like Southern Illinois University in Carbondale who as early as the 1940s had large numbers of Black students. John Holmes, SIUC alumni member I interviewed contributed this “advancement” to the intentional efforts of the president of the university-SIUC with intentionally recruiting Blacks. This president was Morris Delyte. Delyte was an extensive educator but was a progressive thinker concerning Black students.

\textsuperscript{151} Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.

\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
made a few suggestions. With regards to admitting Black students Zeigel expressed to
Doudna the need to change the current admissions policy of only accepting students
who ranked in the “upper-half” percentile of their high school classes. Zeigel believe
that Eastern would not attract any “new Negroes” if the policy remained the same. In
regards to retaining students Zeigel expressed, “…if we are serious about recruiting
more Negro students I think we almost have to think about some special study helps for
them. I wish some interested students group would get interested in a tutorial program.
That would be constructive.” One of the largest risks of students being admitted in
large or small numbers to predominately white institutions is the ability or the
consciousness on the part of the institution to provide measures that would allow them
to be successful once they arrive. Zeigel was at least aware of the need for additional
academic support and this alone should be given notice. However, when Doudna
responded a week later to Zeigel’s suggestions he warned that the final report had been
drafted and it was too late to make changes to admissions policies and the tutoring
services already provided were sufficient. While I appreciated the stance of
investigation that Zeigel took, it is baffling why the responsibility for assisting Black
student was on “some interested student group.” Why couldn’t there be a task force of
some kind created through a cadre of faculty? These faculty would be paid through the
university, etc. this would show the university’s investment in not only admit but
retaining Negro students. However, this was not the case and Doudna was ready to
move forward on the items previously discussed and decided upon.

After the draft of the report came during the later part of July in 1968, Doudna

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153 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General
Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University
Archives, Charleston, Illinois. Letter from William Zeigel to President Quincy Doudna on July 12, 1968.
Subject: Reports Being Given on Curriculum Changes for and Admissions of Black Students.
made nearly twenty recommendations to be fulfilled between the university official and
by black students. Some of the highlights are listed below:

- That the University commit itself to recruiting more Negroes on a continuing basis as a
  matter of institutional policy.
- That the University start a tutoring program by winter quarter to enhance students’ chances
  for success.
- That efforts be made to appoint a black staff member, preferably a recent graduate, in the
  Admissions Office when that office is allocated further professional personnel.
- That the University explore the possibility of launching a small pilot program for students
  without proper qualification for admission, but that before deciding whether to launch such a
  program it give full recognition to the possible depreciating effect the presence of such a
  program would have on the degrees awarded black students who are in the regular program
  and might be confused in the minds of prospective employers with those who had been
  given special consideration and concessions through the admissions process and through
  lowering of academic standards. (While willing to explore the suggestion, the President now
  believes that the arguments against are stronger than those in favor.)*
- That recruiters representing Eastern Illinois University advise unqualified, or poorly
  qualified, black students to try to undertake their first college experience in a junior college
  where there is an open-door policy and where they would be more likely to meet academic
  competition than in a school such as Eastern, where the state Board of Higher Education
  requires that students be in the upper 50% of their classes, except in the summer quarter.
- That the University not admit black students to regular university status who do not meet
  regular admission standards, whether a ‘pilot project’ is established or not.
- That the Admissions Office write the counselors immediately in schools enrolling large
  numbers of Negro students to the effect that while enrollment of beginning students for the
  fall quarter has long been closed, applications from candidates in the upper half of their
  graduating classes will be considered for the winter or spring quarters until the regular
  deadline dates set in the catalog or until some announcement is made that the capacity of the
  University has been reached. 154

This seemed to be the first time that extensive consideration of Black enrollment was
addressed. While there were many recommendations on the part of the university,
many seemed contradictory. For instance, the acceptance of whether there would be a
“pilot project” established for admissions or not seemed to be something Doudna
debated within himself. He spoke in the aforementioned list about the impact it would
have on current students as he makes this evident in a latter correspondence between
himself and Vice President Peter R. Moody.

In early August of 1968, Doudna sent correspondence to Vice President of
Instruction Peter R. Moody requesting his perspective on the feasibility of the special

154 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden
Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern
admittance program for Blacks, specifically with regards its potential of “lowering of academic standards.” Moody made two recommendations. First, he mentioned the possibility of a sort of “bridge program” where 100 students who were in the bottom percentile of their high school classes would come in the summer time and complete academic requirements and training that once the fall quarter started the students would be on track to achieving successfully. Another option Moody suggested would be “experiment” and allow 100 Black students to come in the fall semester an enroll in regular required courses, some would fail and the others who passed would “make the experiment worthwhile.” However, Doudna was opposed to implementing any of these or other special admissions programs for students who did not meet the regular standards. He spoke at length about this in correspondence to his reply letter to Moody. In a memorandum dated August 14, 1968 Doudna stated:

I feel some obligation to have an exploration of this, but I am not sure that we need an ad hoc committee to do it... As you can see, I do not favor it, and I told the black students that. I did tell them that I would be willing to “explore” the idea further but I gave them no notion that I would ultimately favor such a plan. They were made quite aware that my mind is not completely open on the subject. The most telling point that I used was that of self-interest as far as present students are concerned. I pointed out that any such program, even if it were experimental, would depreciate the diplomas of the black students who were fully able to succeed at our regular program after being admitted on a regular basis. I rather think this satisfied them, at least in part.

Though Doudna was aware of schools like University of Illinois in Champaign (U of I) and Northern Illinois University in DeKalb were successfully implementing such plans to gain more students of color, Doudna remained intransigent in his attitude with this

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155 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence to Peter R Moody on August 5 & 14, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. pp. 66 & 68.
156 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence to Peter R Moody on August 5 & 14, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P. 67
157 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence to Peter R Moody on August 14, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
In the same August letter in 1968, Doudna states:

I would like for them (another special committee) to discuss it (to matter of special admissions), but I do not want them to get any ideas that I am trying to develop such a program. I am simply looking for some merit in the program that I have not yet seen. As I indicated to the students, I have no objection to Northern Illinois University or the University of Illinois in undertaking this, but with the great number of junior college it seems to me that their potential for taking care of such matters should be utilized.\(^{159}\)

Along with the University of Illinois, Northern seemed to be “progressive” in their recruitment of black students and staff. It had three Black administrators by 1968 (McKinley Deacon Davis, Williams Brooks, Special Assistant to the President, Gerald L Durley, Counselor and McKinley).\(^{160}\) Deacon David after a vision to increase Blacks chances of altering the directions of their lives, by gaining a college education he implemented the CHANCE program at Northern in 1968.\(^{161}\) This special opportunities program did not lower admissions standards but Davis’ word, “broadened them.” The students admitted to this program did not meet the high school rank or ACT standards but possessed special talents in “athletics, art, music, mechanical or leadership qualities, etc.” Davis believed that raising the standards of college academics was done most effectively by granting admissions to the students who needed it the most. By October 1968, approximately 300 Blacks students were on Northern Illinois’s campus.\(^{162}\)

Doudna, while he did not oppose what was happening at the surrounding institutions, believed that students who did not meet the necessary requirements to be

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\(^{158}\) Eastern did finally did get a the Minority Admissions Program (MAP) that allows special admissions, but did not being until 1991 at Eastern, will after the Doudna’s tenure and death and it outside specified period of study. Northern one the hand, allowed an alternative admissions program in beginning in 1968 under the leadership of McKinley “Deacon” Davis.

\(^{159}\) Ibid.

\(^{160}\) Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence from William Zeigel October 30, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. p.65.


\(^{162}\) Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence from William Zeigel October 30, 1968. 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P.65.
admitted to Eastern should attend junior colleges. In one respect, accolades must be given to a president that wanted to expand the reputation and value of its institution by only not “lowering its’ standards,” however; this inhibited the growth of the student enrollment. Though the numbers of Black students in the succeeding years increased vastly, how much more would they had increased if special programs were implemented?

The greatest impact on recruiting more Black students at Eastern was done by the current Black students with their “retention plan.” Doudna and other committee members made sure the current black students carried their share of the load. Doudna make six recommendation or “special responsibility of black studies,” two of which are highlighted below:

- Black students should make an effort to recruit high caliber black students from among their acquaintances.
- Black students should "tell it like it is" when they talk with prospective students. They should not state that Eastern Illinois University or the City of Charleston is without prejudice or completely free from racism but should attempt to represent the situation as accurately as they can based on their own experience, recognizing that their experience in college is, in most cases, limited to this University and their opportunities for comparison with the situation in other institutions, therefore, are quite limited.163

All six of the responsibilities centered on the need of the black students to “warn” their counterparts about the reality of discrimination at Eastern and in the city of Charleston as well as the importance of high academic standards the institution maintained. Doudna seemed to spend a lot of time admonishing the student committee to provide real truths of their real experiences at Eastern to prospective students. As previously mentioned, in many instances they had not visited Eastern prior and they were shocked at how “different” it was from “home.” Many times this, among other issues, would

163 Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence “Demands” Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. p. 24-25.
lead students to exit the university prematurely.

Recommended by Doudna, which would be then carried out by students, the many college visits to Chicago, East St. Louis and other surrounding cities would drastically impact Black enrollment. By October of 1968, still grappling with the idea of a special admissions policy, a group who oversaw instruction, the Council of Instructors Offices in a committee meeting discussed several issues including defining what it mean to be “disadvantaged.” They decided that disadvantaged students were those students who possessed the ability to attend college and leave home but due to financial constraints were unable to do so. The committee also agreed that the “stigma” of being disadvantaged on Eastern’s campus would pose a grave threat to students and therefore the group prohibited the idea of a special admission program, citing that “the possible erosion of academic effort” and the lack of funding for such a program was inconceivable.¹⁶⁴

In all, no special admissions program was implemented. However, exposing students to Eastern and going into the schools that were not traditionally on the “to visit” list greatly impacted Black enrollment numbers. The process of change happened slowly but surely. With student leaders at the fore, recruitment efforts were increased more and more. The following years progress would be witnessed eventually transforming those measly from the thirty-five students in 1967 to over four hundred in just six years.

¹⁶⁴ Doudna Supplementary Interview File: President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence Council of Instructional Officers, Meeting Minutes of October 17, 1968 1967-69, Record Box, (Doudna Supplementary Interview File), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
The next issue tackled was the recruitment of more Black faculty and staff. In 1968, there were three full time professors: Dr. Ann E Smith, Dr. Bill T. Ridgeway and Dr. Frances Pollard and one part-time staff (which was probably Leta Ridgeway, a spousal hire, wife of Dr. Bill T. Ridgeway). Dr. Ann E. Smith was the first full-time faculty of color to come to Eastern in 1960.165

At the time the committee convened in 1968, Doudna had interviewed over 200 candidates for possible positions at Eastern and only one of which were black. Doudna records that the position was offered, but denied. In order to gain more faculty members, Eastern’s practice was to send job announcements only to schools that awarded Ph.D. degrees. However, at the time, there was only one of the schools that offered Ph.D. was from a Historically Black College of University (HBCU) or “predominantly negro university” that Eastern had on its list.166 These hiring practices needed to shift rather quickly. Ultimately, action done on the part of the committee was threefold: 1) that the committee sent job announcements to fifteen HBCUs around the country, 2) that the new list of schools be maintained and included in the regular mailing list for future use and 3) that the principle of selecting the best possible candidates be chosen regardless of race, color, creed or origin be continued.167 These recommended actions were completed within a month of the committees’ original meeting regarding the demands. In hopes of maintaining an effective atmosphere and ensuring that the students understood the complexities of such matters, Doudna and

165 Doudna does states that “There had been a small number of other Negro teachers here before that date (1963). He also noted that there was an “unknown but rather large” amount of non-Caucasian staff during that time. Doudna’s Demand Report. (Doudna Supplemental Interview File Folder) p. 28. Also, the detailed information I found of Dr. Ann E Smith was in her biography with History Makers in August of 2013.
166 Doudna’s Supplementary Interview File Folder P. 28
167 Doudna’s Supplementary Interview File Folder P. 24
other committee members charged the Black students on a few fronts: 1) to judge the Black professors at the same standards they would any another teacher, 2) be sympathetic regarding the extreme shortage in quality teachers and 3) understand that there was a high demand that existed among faculty of color through the nation. The need for patience on the part of the students were important, as most demands were not answered instantaneously.

While no additional faculty was added in 1968, making good on some of the recommending actions were significant to the students. In 1969, when the university made one of its first hires since the issuance of the demands, Doudna begin to value the impact the presence of faculty of color in the lives of Black students. He states:

An illustration of the latter came when I was able to announce that a black candidate who had been offered a position had accepted. Without thinking it especially important, I went on to state the department in which the candidate would have a position. One of the (Black) girls "lit up like a Christmas tree" with an expression of enthusiasm and happiness that startled me. I said to her, "Is that your field?" and she said that it was. I then caught a new appreciation of how much it means to a black student to have a black teacher.\(^{168}\)

Not only was the recruiting of Black faculty beneficial for Black student it was critical for the retention of other Black faculty and staff already employed at Eastern. Recruitment of more students, faculty and staff with similar backgrounds and experiences created that element of community that is essential to survival in any community and institution.

**Black Studies Curriculum**

The third contentious issue (of the six) related to enhancing the academic curriculum. According to Doudna, the study of Negro in the United States had been

\(^{168}\) Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. Pg. 17.
formally discussed and in had been in the planning phases as early as on April 1, 1968 (prior to King’s murder). The history department had planned to offer the course as early as summer 1969. So the current committee could serve as in an evaluative fashion. Many students on the committee were not satisfied with how the Negro had been presented in sections of their history and anthropology courses. This insufficiency was evident in that the bulk of the courses that “touched” upon Negro history started and ended with American slavery. The student leadership challenged this notion by expressing the desire to make African history more reflective of its rich wealthy and extensive culture.

The recommended actions by part of the committee was to continue with the developments of the course entitled “The Negro in the United States,” the committee stated the course should outline: “…the origin of the black man in Africa, the arrival of the white man (to Africa), the exploitation of the black man, the black man’s arrival in America, and a detailed outline of the role of the black man in American history.”

However, there were some administrators who that did not agree with curriculum changes and implementation of Black history. Zeigel stated in a correspondence to Doudna. He states,

…it appears to me we would be moving in the wrong direction to put into curriculum very many special courses for any segment of the population. Such courses lead to divisiveness rather than unity. I would favor, as I indicated earlier, weaving into American history the contributions of many peoples to modern society, placing emphasis on where we go from here rather than who did what at the Boston Massacre. In so doing we would give attention where attention was due, to the Negro, the Jew, the Scandinavian, the Oriental, etc., but we would not be setting one against the other.

The inclusionary approach VP Zeigel was attempting here was pretty typical of the idea

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169 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P. 27
170 Reports Given on Curriculum Changes for and Admission of Blacks Students, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence from William Zeigel to Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, July 12, 1968:1967-69. Record Box, (Folder Doudna’s Supplementary Interview File) Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
that would come up later with regards to reverse discrimination. How can we provide special services or rules for one group over another? While the argument is sensible, it lacks great context. The groups of students that demanded curriculum changes did so not as a method to gain power over another group but to witness a sense of relevancy of their existence in history and to validate their culture on campus and inside the classroom.

Nevertheless, by December of 1968, the first Negro history\(^\text{171}\) course was slated.\(^\text{172}\) Developed under the direction of the History department this course was designed, according to Doudna to “outline the origin of the Black man in Africa, the arrival of the white man (to Africa), the exploitation of the black man, the black man is arrival in America, and a detailed outline of the role of the black man in American history.”\(^\text{173}\) The responsibility Doudna issued to the students mainly focused on enrollment into the course. Firstly, he wanted to be sure that each of the students that rallied for this effort actually enrolled in the course when possible. Also, impressed upon the students was the financial impact on the university when there is low enrollment of the course. Seemingly, Doudna believed it to be important to privy the students regarding the business of running the institution effectively. Lastly, Doudna expressed to the students how important it was for them to maintain an open-minded, that they consider the

\(^{171}\) With the recommendation of the Negro history course Doudna was in step with current Illinois legislation. He states, “…That instructors be requested to pay appropriate attention to the place of the Negro in history, society, and culture in all pertinent courses. (This action is in keeping with Illinois House Bill No. 19, which provides for including the study of the role and contributions of racial and ethnic groups in the history of this State and Nation.) I need to get a direct copy of Illinois House Bill No. 19. Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P. 28.

\(^{172}\) “Negro culture course slated.” \textit{Daily Eastern News}. 54(19) 1. December 13, 1968. The History department was scheduled to debut the Negro in the United States course, the Sociology-Anthropology Department continued developing the African Cultures course.

\(^{173}\) Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. P. 27.
communities and environmental impact instructors, which would ultimately impact their interpretation of history. Doudna forewarned the students about this possibility and hoped they would not take offense if these issues arose.\textsuperscript{174}

With this, another sign of hope from the administration at Eastern, AAA and other students led out in publicizing the course. The good attendance helped create room for succeeding courses. More courses were developed and true change was finally being realized.

\textit{Opening Fraternal Organizations}

Prior to the latter part of 1969\textsuperscript{175} there were no predominantly Black fraternities and sororities on Eastern’s campus. This led to issues of discrimination as well. Many black members who sought admissions into predominantly white fraternities and sororities were denied admissions. The students of AAA too proposed this as an issue to investigation. After months of meetings the committees drafted notices to be sent to each fraternity and sorority reiterating their policies of non-discriminatory practices regarding admittance of new members without preference to “color, race or creed.” These notices were sent at the campus level as well as to the national governing bodies. The committee member reviewed the local constitutions and bylaws of each sorority and fraternity and ultimately their existence was threatened due to non-compliance.

By the latter part of 1969, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated (the first black fraternity nationally and locally) was founded by two pledgees that had sought

\textsuperscript{174} Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois, P. 30.

\textsuperscript{175} Alpha Phi Alpha was the first black fraternity on campus. Tau Theta Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated predominantly Black fraternity on campus at Eastern., both in 1969. The rest of the organization would be chartered between after that time, most by 1973. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated in 1971, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Incorporated 1971. In 1972, Omicron Delta chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated was chartered.
membership in the Champaign chapter of the organization at U of I. Once membership was attained at U of I’s chapter with the two students-Edge Stevens and William (Bill) Wooten, they returned to Eastern and birthed out its chapter.\textsuperscript{176} According to Pullen, the next group was Curly Bradford (CR Bradford or Curley Bradford...)…Clarence Mays, Willie Stephanie, and Julius Ballridge. Those were the original guys.”\textsuperscript{177} Though many Black students had a difficult time gaining membership into white organizations, once the Black students began developing their own organizations, they were more inclusive. In fact, the Alphas were the first fraternity with a white student; his name was Steve (last name is not known).\textsuperscript{178}

\textit{Financial Aid}

Another issue that was prevalent among students was obtaining the necessary resources to pay for college. During that time there was a limited amount of loans and grants that covered full tuition besides athletic scholarships. Many Black students made it to campus, but to stay there took financial resources. Many resorted to multiple jobs to pay for school and these students sometimes had fiduciary responsibility back home. Doudna, in researching the current status of student aid issues discovered the following:

\textquote{...For the year 1967-68, the Negro enrollment represented .8 of 1% of the total enrollment of the University. The committee found that black students received 6% of all Educational Opportunity Grant money and 5.8% of all National Defense Loan money. The committee further learned that 2% of the students on the Work-Study Program were Negroes. Another fact brought out in the study of the committee was that 11% (717) of all white students and 44% (24) of all black students received some aid from federal programs administered by the Office of Financial Aids.}

\textsuperscript{176} Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.  
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{179} Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. 37(14).
Nearly half of the Black students presented needed help in paying for school. Having sufficient finances, like today, meant the difference in school or enduring the ride back home. To improve issues concerning financial aid, the committee decided that the institution would actively seek out information regarding private scholarships from national organizations like the Urban League, etc. and that school registration fees would be waived for disadvantaged students. Of the responsibilities on the part of the Black students, they were to possibly register for less academic credit hours and were encouraged to seek part-time employment to help defray educational cost. These recommendations in many ways were no brainers.

One year after the initial protest with demands, in late May of 1969, students challenged Doudna again regarding recruitment of more Black students. Armed with 600 signatures, a group of 150 students marched into the Doudna’s office. The aim was to get $50,000 to help with recruitment. Doudna met the students in front of the administration building and discussed his concerns. He believed that the proposal was not clear. Doudna seemed confused, was the solicited monies to be used to provide scholarships or to use as a salary for faculty. Because his mother passed away a day earlier, Doudna agreed to provide the students with a counterproposal. Eventually, after many debates and defeated votes in the student and faculty senate, Doudna was able to gain approval for $2 to be assessed per quarter from all students to be used for “economically and socially deprived, but academically qualified…Black, Indian and Puerto Ricans students.” Scholarships that waived registration fees for disadvantaged students became effective in the fall of 1969. The $50,000 was never again discussed.

\[180\] Anatomy of a Relationship File 72(3).
\[181\] Doudna’s Supplementary Interview File Folder P. 83.
Housing Discrimination-The Erkstine Butler Case

While the condition of Black students began to slowly shift, the committee was forced to deal with housing issues, the last of the original set of demands. Housing was a major issue for students in general, but for Black students in particular. Students would be invited to attend a university, but finding a secure place to live was another story.

With the limitation of space in dormitories, many Black students were relegated to finding housing off campus. Turning to the community for adequate housing were fraught with challenges for Black students. Oftentimes when students called about vacancies, they would be given misinformation. The students believed that these were acts of racism through discrimination. Once bringing these concerns to the committee (with the initial set of demands), they agreed to develop a “checks and balance” system to make the private owners aware of the potential consequences of discrimination. The committee thoroughly investigated the claims and through phone surveys found that of the private owners renting to male students, 11 out of the 35 surveyed said they “would definitely not rent to Negroes.” Of those that rented to female students, 7 of the 49 concurred. After a more thorough investigation of the 22 cases, three were removed from the housing list in violation of the non-discriminatory practice rule. Other private owners voluntarily withdrew from the “available housing list” once they were reminded that they could not discriminate on the basis of race. The committee

182 Student Housing-Butler Discrimination, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1969, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
183 Four cases were not included in the final reports that were available. It is not sure why those private owners were not long apart of the approved housing list. These four could be part of those that voluntarily opted to be excluded from the list one the housing committee made them aware of their obligations.
ultimately decided to form an official committee, the Housing Review Committee. The Housing Review Committee would formally adjudicate and investigate cases of alleged discrimination.

In 1969, the Erksine Butler cases would be the first case for the Committee. Patty West, Olivia Taylor and Janice Walker filed a complaint with the Review Committee on Housing against Charleston property owner Mr. Erksine Butler and his wife Mrs. Butler on June 23, 1969. The first hearing was set for July 3, 1969 at 3 p.m. in the Heritage Room of the University Union. A brief handwritten letter by the three students laid out their case, dated June 23, 1969, it read:

Dear Sir:

Yesterday we call Mr. Butler, and asked about a room for fall for three. He said, “for us to come over because he had the room.” So we went over, one of the girls was out of town, so we didn’t sign anything but he said we had room. We went back today June 23, 1969, and he said he couldn’t take us because it would start trouble. I asked him if it was because we were Black and he said yes. Why? Why?

Thank you.

(signed) Janice Walker, Olivia Taylor and Patty Spates (West) 345-6740.

The Butlers were an elderly couple in Charleston who provided housing for students in the area. They were contracted through the university to provide housing to students at a desirable rate and not to discriminate. Once the allegations of discrimination were made, the Review Committee gained several pieces of information. Though the Butlers had never rented to Negroes, they said that race was not an issue but the amount of space in his house was problematic. Erskine said he had space for two of the girls, but

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184 Review Committee on Housing comprised of two faculty member appointed by the Dean, Student Personnel Services, two white students appointed by the Student Senate, three black students elected under the auspices of the Afro-American Association, two registered householders appointed by the Dean, Student Personnel Services and one representative of the Charleston Commission on Human Relations chosen by that body.

185 President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence from the students listed above, June 23, 1969, Record Box, (Student Housing-Butler Discrimination Case Folder) Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
could not house the third girl because it might prove troublesome if “the black and the white girls roomed/slept in the same bed.” Because the Butlers only had double beds in the room, he thought this would be “unwise.” Later in the investigation when Mrs. Butler was questioned, she said she did not have issues with the race of the students but her only concern was that she did not feel “physically able to cope with the possible quarrels and disputes.” Having a lot of black students might be “too noisy as they are so jolly and lively.” Later the Butlers said they did not have a problem with the Black students but the white tenants that were living in the home already probably would take issue. Learning that the other white students had issues with their coming, the Black group of students confronted the white group at a local Laundromat facility. When confronted, one white student said she did not have an issue with race, but she stated, “My whole problem was I had difficulty getting along with kids from Chicago.” This student was from Effingham, Illinois a predominantly white town just forty minutes south of Charleston.

When the preliminary meetings ended, Mr. Butler was asked would he take the students. He answered, “No, not these. Other Negroes if they were nice.” I am not certain if “nice” were a criteria for rental properties, but this was Mr. Butler’s story. Ultimately, the committee decided in a 6-3 decision that the alleged allegations of racial discrimination were true and later in a 9-1 vote to have Mr. Butler’s home removed

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186 Housing Review Committee Report. President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Student Housing-Butler Discrimination Case Folder) Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
187 Housing Review Committee Report from the Housing Office. President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Student Housing-Butler Discrimination Case Folder) Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
from the approved housing list. The committee also recommended that the proceedings from the case be released to the news media.

**Ona Louisa Norton**

While there were menial gains for Black students renting from white homeowners, many students still confronted discriminatory housing practices. For some Blacks Ona Norton and her husband, would proved to be a ray of hope. Elmer Pullen recalls some of his memories about the Norton Family:

...When I first came here she (Mrs. Norton) would rent houses and one of the older students would kind of act as the house mom. Say for instance you were a senior, you would act as the house mom but Mrs. Norton would have rented the house. The girls lived here. But she kept guys in her own house, she and her husband, the house they lived in. Some of them were athletes and some of them were regular students. I remember guys from Decatur- Bob Warnsly, Willie Stephanie, they lived with Mr. and Mrs. Norton. And some of the girls-Hazel Thomas, Ulstine Watson, Annabelle Watson...and had quite a few students to go through the University that lived with the Norton's. She (Mrs. Norton) lived to be 100...101. I think she came this way from Mount Vernon.

Upon some preliminary interviews in 2008, many would confirm what Pullen offered regarding Norton. Ridgeway noted that Norton was a critical figure in relation to Black students. Originally beginning in the 1950s, Mrs. Norton and her husband Kenneth Norton provided housing for football players who could not find suitable housing on campus. By the late 60s and earlier 70s her occupants extended to non-athletes. Norton a native of Mount Vernon, Illinois was reared in Charleston, her husband in Mattoon (a neighboring city of Charleston). Norton experienced much discrimination during her school days and understood first hand the impact it could cause. Married for

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188 Housing Review Committee Report. President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Student Housing-Butler Discrimination Case Folder) Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.
189 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
190 This was according to historian Dr. Onaiwu W Ogbomo, who served as associate professor of history and Director of African American Studies at EIU in 2001 in speaking of Dr. Norton, p. 16.
sixty years, the Norton’s were notable business owners and community members. Mr. Norton’s died in 1973 and Mrs. Norton remained active in the community until her death in 1995 at the age of 101, just two years prior to my arrival at the university. Many of the students who lived in the Norton homes were successful in the educational pursuit at Eastern and beyond. Olivia Taylor, one of the plaintiffs in the Butler case lived with Mrs. Norton, Pullen was excited to report that she later became a medical physician.

President Doudna and Student Relationships

Though initially the relationships between Doudna (and other university officials) and the Black students were tense, the various meetings between students over an extended period of time began to impact relationships for the better. For example, Doudna would initially correspond with student leaders to check on their physical well-being as well as enlightening them on current issues or research. In one instance, Sandra King, secretary of AAA, who assisted in strategic planning and evaluations of the original demands, withdrew from the university in February of 1969. Correspondence from her department was sent to Doudna and Doudna wrote and mailed a personal letter to Sandra. Dated March 7, 1969, Doudna wrote:

Dear Miss King:

I was both surprised and disappointed to learn that you had left the University. Actually, I did not learn of it until two or three days ago. I surely hope you will return this summer if at all possible. I do not know whether your grades will permit it because I do not know whether you will get WF or WP in your various courses. Clearly, however, you have the ability to do college work and could be of a great deal of service to society on completion of a college degree.

Regardless of whether you return, I want you to know that I have appreciated the contacts I have had with you. You have been an asset to Eastern Illinois University and I feel sure on the basis of all I know now that we can someday expect to be proud of you as a graduate of this institution. Please accept my good wishes.

Ibid.
Cordially yours, signed Quincy Doudna President

Prior to leaving, King’s department documented her reasons for leaving was “personal.” In a departmental correspondence Dean Rogers of King’s department writes to Doudna, “…she had no particular reason for leaving but just doesn’t want to be here and anyone with her attitude has no business trying to go to college.”\(^{192}\) I am most certain that Dean Rogers did not expect her personal correspondence be made public, but it would critical for the reader to understand the rationale of when a student “just doesn’t want to be there” equating to their lack of concern for higher education. It seemed evident that Rogers and many like her did not fully understand the capacity of adjustment that was necessary on the part of Black students to make peace with their new homes. Was there an exit interview with a qualified counselor? I am not quite sure of the circumstances or if King returned after the summer of 1969 as she promised but I am grateful to learn of the intentional effort on the part of Doudna in sending a letter. This effort showed that not only had recruitment become a priority but retention become to be an important factor as well.

Still Doudna wanted to maintain effective relationships as the student population began change. He in the below correspondence maintains communication with the president of the AAA in 1968-69 as well as 1969-70.

Dear Mr. (Elmer) Pullen:
I thought you might be interested in a copy of the first section of my Address to the Faculty. One is enclosed. I would be glad to have your reaction to this sometime when you have an opportunity to talk with me. (Dated: September 11, 1969)

In another correspondence, Doudna writes to Gregory Crockett who was elected President of AAA at the on October of 1969. Evidence of correspondences to Crockett exist on several occasions, but here he writes:

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\(^{192}\) Eastern Illinois University Interdepartmental Communication. Subject: Sandra King. Dean Rogers. 3-4-69. (AAA file folder).
Dear Mr. (Gregory) Crockett:
I do not believe I gave you a copy of an article entitled “The Black Man’s Rise to the Top.”
This is written by a man whom I got to know some years ago when he was president of the
University of the West Indies. If you would like a few extra copies to distribute to some of your
friends, please drop in some day and pick them up. While writing I would like to advise that I
would be pleased to talk with you once a month or so regularly or any time you feel it would be
helpful for you to come in. My schedule makes appointments necessary but they can usually be
arranged within a day or two.

Cordially yours,
Quincy Doudna
President (Date: December 1, 1969)

The maintenance of relationships seemed pretty critical to Doudna. On a few instances,
Doudna wrote about the transience of collegiate life and brevity involved in working
with a particular group of university students. He expressed his frustration once in this
regard. It proved cyclical for him—students come in to his office and complain, work to
change begins and is fulfilled, the student then graduates and new students come in to
complain again. Much of the change witnessed, as Doudna alluded, was temporarily
permanent. 193 Based on the information he provides, Doudna resented the transient
nature of being a student. One group of students would work to establish a rapport
with him especially in confronted challenges, but soon the students are gone and new
students come as well as new complaints. Because of the lack of previous knowledge,
this in turn a made Doudna believe that there was no value on the part of the new
student in regards to the aforementioned labor.

Later, in a conversation with a female student, in spite of the “advancements”
that the Black students were witnessing, work still needed be done. Doudna discovered
one night in late December of 1968 that the some Black students still possessed a level of
distrust for him and felt like “nothing was being done.” While the unidentified female

193 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden
Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern
student was neutral in the matters pertaining to Black students, she reported in regards to the other students, “They regard you as so far beyond them because of your position and your ability to “use words” that a discussion on the subject with a large group world probably be unproductive.” Doudna, seemed to understand what the students meant but asked for further clarification, “you mean they don’t really believe me?” The student nodded to agree with his question. Doudna later stated that, “this was very disheartening thing to hear, but I was glad to know it if it is indeed the case.” So in spite of the amount of effort exerted to fix “all things Black,” students desired more.

1969-70: Need for Change, Still

While previous conversations and strategic plans had been developed and some even implemented pertaining to recruitment of students and faculty and staff as well as a cultural relevant curriculum, there was still much work to be done. Change was occurring but according to the Black students not fast enough.

Just as things would seemingly settle, in February of 1970 students further demanded changes with life and policies on Eastern’s campus. Doudna set up a meeting with Gregory Crockett, then president of AAA, but instead 12-15 other students showed up with him. Originally Doudna wanted to discuss the intercultural council that had been discussed and implemented a few months earlier in December of 1969, but things took a turn. Students insisted otherwise, they felt as if they were being left out of a discussion on Proposed Black Recruitment and Improved Race Relationship Program.” This ten year proposal was given by AAA gave to Doudna in the summer of

194 Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois. pp. 25.
1969. The ten-year race relations program encompassed two major components. These components included:

1) The development of a Council on Intercultural Relations (that Ernest Morris requested.)

2) Grant in aid for black students. This would consist of awards of 3 different amounts. A large number would be at $1000 and few available for $2000 and the others at $600.\footnote{Office of the President Address to Faculty, Eastern Illinois University, September 10, 1969.}

Doudna agreed with these proposed components if he had the backing of the Student Senate and the Faculty Senate. But students had other priorities that were not previously addressed. The major one involved the absence of Black students on university brochures. After an hour long meeting Doudna assured the group that this was a quick fix. Also, the students felt “left out” of the planning of the ten-year program. Doudna explained that the program would be a university wide effort and did not feel a need to bring in one selected group of students. The students were not satisfied with Doudna’s response and mandated an increase of Black staff and faculty. Doudna understood their concern and expressed to the students that sixty Black students from Silas Purnell’s Ada S. McKinley in Chicago had visited the campus a day before, and Black faculty would be critical to their success at the university. Hence, he seemed to understand the concern. However, students believed the commonly held notion that Eastern was a ‘hostile environment’ but that Doudna dismissed it as mere rhetoric and not reality. In one instance the students believe this ideology and lack of understand caused some Black students to leave the institution prematurely.\footnote{Anatomy of a Relationship: Afro-American Association, President Quincy Van Ogden Doudna, General Correspondence 1967-69, Record Box, (Folder Afro-American Association), Eastern Illinois University Archives, Charleston, Illinois.} Doudna did not experience the hostility that the students mentioned and therefore it was dismissed.\footnote{“Fee hike for black scholarship proposed” Daily Eastern News. September 14, 1969. Vol L.V. No. 3.}
Though not violent, the turmoil was not yet done. In spring of 1970, 50-60 (or in Doudna’s description “full of blacks”) mostly Black students occupied Doudna’s office in the early morning. Doudna had not arrived to his office yet, but by the time he did as Pullen recalls, Julius Ballridge took his seat. He said, “...He went and sat in the president’s seat you know?” Doudna recalls the event, he states:

When I got to the office I found two or three campus police nearby and two Vice-Presidents on hand. The latter had tried to get the students to leave but they had not done so. I decided to go in to see them alone but Mr. Read decided to go with me. They (the students) had locked both doors but I opened the side door with a key. A student was sitting in my chair. I told him that if he would get out of my chair, I would sit down and talk with them.

Once talks were underway, things lasted about an hour. Though not violent, Doudna described the conversation as a bit “stormy.” And one of the students had used toilet papers from Doudna’s restroom to jot down more demands. The new demands read as follows:

1. The hiring of more black faculty so that it means 10% of the total faculty, this include[s]
   a. advisers
   b. administrators
   c. coaches, etc.
2. The establishment of a black cultural center and a black student house
3. More courses with a orientation
4. That we student in black environment [
5. 10% black enrollment by fall, 1970
6. A black Dean of Students
7. Blacks approve any appointments of committees that affect blacks

While the demands were not formally prepared (as evident by the typos/errors) in the same fashion as the first set in 1968, the students held steadfast on their hopes for change. The university seemingly got to work on the issues at hand. The students would witness almost instantaneous results.

Before this, in the fall of 1969, Doudna wanted to respond publicly to all of the

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198 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
turmoil that had happened. He would use the Faculty Senate to do the honors.

He states:

Like many other institution, Eastern Illinois University has been concerned for some time with making higher education more readily available to black youth and make it more relevant to them. Many universities have gone no further than to pay lip service to these goals. Others began belated but crash programs after some kind of violent confrontation. Eastern Illinois University falls between the two extremes. We have long been concerned but not concerned enough. We have long done something but not enough.  

Here Doudna positioned himself and Eastern in the “safe” space between what could be characterized as two evils—those (institutions) that did nothing to advance the plight of black youth and those that created “crash” programs for them. He was pleased with the progress and reiterated his stance on not favoring a special admissions program for unqualified students, due to the fact that it would cause a lack of pride on the part of the benefactor. During this speech Doudna provided an evaluation of sorts as to the original demands aforementioned previously.

1970s-The Turning Tide

Doudna and the committee made good on most recommendations. By May of 1969 Ernest Morris had graduated with his graduate degree and was now employed as a counselor in the admissions office at Eastern.  

As noted earlier, Doudna saw the importance of students in inner cities connecting with a person of color at the institution in which they were interested. Also, Pullen recalls some of the recruiting trips he had the opportunity to experience while still a student at Eastern before Morris’ tenure. He recollects:

As a matter of fact, when I was a student, Bill Wooten and I went to Chicago and other schools with the people in the admissions office before Ernie Morris retired. We went to Chicago schools, with Murray Schultz he was the director of admissions and we went to Chicago black schools trying to recruit students and along the way we met a guy named Silas Purnell who worked out

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200 Doudna, Quincy Van Ogden: A Relationship (Doudna Speeches File Folder) Address to Faculty September 10, 1969. Eastern Illinois University Archives. Charleston, Illinois

of the basement in Chicago.²⁰²

Between 1964-1970 African American college student enrollment doubled. The greatest increase of Black students enrollment happened not at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, but at predominantly white institutions like Eastern. The presence of Black students on recruiting trips and strategies that were implemented under Morris’ tenure would provide beneficial. The campus was changing for the better. Black fraternities and sororities were being established. The second set of demands had begun manifestation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Overall Students</th>
<th>Black Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>6,100</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>6,658</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>7,277</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>7,997</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>8,214</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>8,028</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>7,517</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Data Not Available</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁰² Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
With regard to enrollment (noted in Table 3), Morris, admissions counselor and recruiter at Eastern outlined in the June 17, 1970 *Daily Eastern News* that, “Eastern’s Black enrollment will “possibly double….”203 The Black community at Eastern was further developing. Later in 1973, note that while the enrollment numbers were slightly decreasing for the general student body, that year marked the largest increase for Black student since the inception of the university.

*Recruitment of Faculty*

There was an immediate push to diversify the faculty and staff with the onset of the Affirmative Action Officer and the concerns addressed on the behalf of students, 1970 would mark the largest increase of Black faculty and staff at Eastern’s. Pullen recalled this time just after he graduated. As he was working a job in Springfield he saw Doudna as he was at the capitol. In an effort to recruit Pullen to return to Eastern as an employee, Doudna admonished him to apply. Pullen was shocked at the request considering the role he played in “demanding more” for the institution. Upon seeing Pullen Doudna:

“\textquote[Elmer] We’re going have some opening at Eastern, why don’t you apply?\textquote And I had worked as the President of the African American Association and had protested against this man, ok?

Doudna continued…we are going to be hiring some people and that was the summer they brought in like 8 or 9 black people.” That was when Dr. Franklin came in. Dr. Franklin and I came to work at the same time. I left here (Eastern) in February and came back in August (of 1970). I worked for the State for like 4-5 months. … (In recalling the new hires) Jimmie Franklin. Me. Jim Johnson, Dean John. Majorie Saunders. Freddy Lambert. Several people hired that year. At one time we had quite a few on staff. And in the community that was one black family, the Norton’s-Mr. and Mrs. Norton.204

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203 *Daily Eastern News*. “Black Enrollment up.” Vol LV…No. 53
204 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript. From pictures I see Mr. Norton was white or very fair skin.
Also, John Craft was a part of the crew that Pullen made reference to above. Craft was an alumnus and was hired as a graduate student. He eventually worked his way up the ranks and became an assistant professor in the Physical Education Department. In 1972, Craft would make Eastern proud, as he became the first Eastern student to compete in the triple jump event at the Olympics, held in Germany.

James “Jimmy” Johnson, as Pullen referred to him, was hired during this same period time. A native of Brazil, Indiana Johnson too was an Eastern Alumnus. During his time at Eastern in 1952 he played on the championship basketball team. In 1970 when Johnson was hired to work at Eastern, he served as Assistant Dean of Student Personnel. In this capacity, Johnson’s presence would be critical for students as his function was to primarily address student issues that were academic, financial or personal. Students had great access to him, as his office was located in the bottom of one of the dormitories.205

With the influx of Blacks, both Eastern’s student and faculty/staff populations began to shift from token representation to formalizing communities of color. One such community came with the Concerned Citizens Council (CCC). This was a group of community members and faculty/staff that would address community concerns with regard to Black people. When Pullen talks about that group he says:

Well for every city, you need a group. And the NAACP required 50 members but it wasn’t that many people here. Concerned Citizens Council, had acted as a group that did about the same (as NAACP). There was one thing that did happen. It was a guy that got killed here. This black dude killed a guy. It used a bar here called Sporty’s. You go down the hill but the jail and it’s used to be a bar there, 8th street, down below. This one dude from Champaign killed this white dude, so that was an interesting summer. The friction was kind of high here. I think it was probably around that time the group got together. I think the guy worked at Rose and Taylor barbershop in Champaign. He was not a student, he was a band member and an argument ensued. The CCC got involved with that. Then, we had children; we thought if you had a group, it would be good when approaching the school administration. They respected you a little bit more.206

206 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
Dr. Franklin was one of the founding members of CCC and during his interview he was proud to note some of their accomplishments. He said, “We were able to establish the Ona Norton Scholarship (for Eastern students who excelled academically), support the public school students, and our reactions to some issues that took place on campus and around the community.”207 Their presence put pressure on administrators especially in regards to hiring and retaining of Black staff. As Golda Franklin heralded during my interview with her husband, “the CCC was more than just a group; they were a family!”

Black House

Later that fall, in December 1970, the Black students would have a place in which to call “home.” The Afro-American Cultural Center or “The Black” was up and ready for the students. For many students this house would be a place of refuge. After classes or in between classes this was a place Black students (or any student for that matter) would go to rest, study or mingle. The Black House for Black students was a place they took ownership. Some students remember their times, Pullen recalls:

C.R. Bradford, was the first director of the African American culture center. At the time they had an apartment of upstairs, he and his wife lived there. We had a library. A lot of activities took place at the culture center. We had tutors set up, if you had a problem in math there somebody there that could help you in math. All of this was back in the early 70s and 80s. That house of over there was used quite a bit. (He points in the director of the house.)208

Jackson-Moyo speaks of the value of this space:

The Black House was used it was a meeting place; it was a performance place, a cooking place we cooked full meals in there. We had a library in there you could find any black book you wanted. It was a place to study. After Dick Gregory came here we would just go there and sit on the floor and listen to him talk. For hours like until one o’clock on the morning.209

207 Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
208 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
209 Yvette Jackson-Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
Multifaceted in its uses, the Black House located on 1525 Seventh Street would be forever treasured in the hearts and minds of these students and students to come. Doudna understood the times and had high hopes for the campus. During the ribbon cutting ceremony, President Doudna stated, “"I hope this is not only a ribbon-cutting, but the cutting of any separation that exists on this campus between colors."" Though opened to all students, Black students mostly frequented the location and used it as a haven of knowledge, rest and peace.

Afro-American Studies Program

Nearly ten courses on Black history had been taught, developed or were underway by early 1970. In June of 1970, Floridian John Price taught a course for the summer on Black music. Price served as department chair in the music department at Florida Memorial University. He seemed to like Eastern, he states, “, “Eastern seems large (considering his small town in FL), but it appears to be well student-oriented...People seem to be treated and handled in an intelligent way. “ This and other courses served as the foundation for the Afro-American Studies Program. This idea was innovative, as Eastern is believed to be the first state institution to award baccalaureate degrees in Afro-American Studies.

White history professor Arlen Fowler was one of the biggest advocates of black studies and served as founding director in 1970. He was also the first professor at Eastern to teach a course on Black in America, in which students gave glowing reviews. After a brief tenure, Zoology professor Dr. Ridgeway was appointed as director of Afro-American Studies. After one year, Dr. Ridgeway served as the director of the program

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for two years. He led the students and helped develop further curriculum and resources to improve the program.

In 1973, Dr. Willa Mae Hemmons of Ohio came and served as Director of the program. In step with the second list of demands, Doudna made good on his promise. Pullen recalled this time:

I was one of the members on the board. We had suggested there be an African American studies program. And Dr. Fowler, Arlene Fowler, he was a white man, a good white man. He was a good guy. Arlene Fowler. It was shortly after that that I came back to work. There were some guys on the Student Senate who were instrumental too- there was a guy named Bob Sampson, he was a white guy from the Decatur area, he, a guy name Mark Weesir, Karl Filsco, who was over student government and he some guys made some, some suggestions and those suggestions were accepted by the Student Senate. One of the suggestions was for the Minority Student Scholarship. There was a lot of resentment about that. By that was brought out to help minorities come to school here. That was through the student government, it was part of those demands that we had. But Dr. Fowler and Dr. Filsco they were able to push this through the student senate which the help of Bob Sampson, Ken Mitker, Mark Weesir, a guy name Walton…many students didn’t appreciate that their tuition and fee money, going to help some minority. You know? But we were able to get it through and Quincy Doudna didn’t disapprove of it. But African American Studies has done quite a bit here at the University.  

Advancement through great resistance seemed to be the strategy of the day. Many white students were instrumental and helped strategize to see a level of equality for Black students in relation to curriculum. However, as Pullen states, there were some that did not appreciate their monies aiding Black students in any way.

The Name Change of the Student Union

One of the more violent events that happened at Eastern occurred in 1970 during the name change of the University Union. After the untimely death of Martin Luther King Jr. many Black students and others lead the effort to add his name to such a permanent fixture on Eastern’s campus. This did not come without incredible opposition. The president of the Student Senate proposed a resolution requesting the name be changed.

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212 Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
from the *University Student Union* to the *Martin Luther King Jr. University Union*. This resolution was sent to the Faculty Senate who then shared it to President Doudna. The Faculty Senate sent the material over to the governing body, the *Building and Grounds Committee*. Several months passed and no communication occurred. The Student Senate president then renewed the request. After it heard back from *Building and Grounds*, the Faculty Senate passed the resolution. Once Doudna was made aware of the status, he disapproved the request noting that it went against the tradition of the institution to name a building after an individual who had not directly impacted the institution. The Faculty Senate, with assistance from the Board of Governors body, overrode Doudna’s decision. By November of 1971, the item was approved.\(^{213}\)

Two months following the unanimous Board decision the first and second sign placed outside the front of the Union bearing King’s name was stolen. The third sign was demolished. Pullen recalls:

> That was quite interesting, the naming of the center. Prior to me leaving here, there was a sign setting up between McAfee and Union that was damaged. It was like hit with a sledgehammer or something. The name of this building was really, really tough but they finally got it through.

> …they wanted to name it Martin Luther King and folks didn’t particularly like Martin Luther King because he was for what was right. He believed that the time was always right to do what’s right. (laughs). So that was interesting.\(^{214}\)

The naming battle started under Doudna’s tenure but was complete seven months into Gilbert Fite’s appointment. Fite seemed to be indifferent about the process and allowed the Board of Governors via the recommendations of the Student and Faculty Senates to have the final say. Dr. Jimmie Franklin wrote an article regarding the subject matter. A portion of it states:

> The recent dedication of the University Union in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., constituted a significant event in the history of Eastern. The historic importance resides not in the controversy provoked by the proposal to the name of the edifice for that great black American

\(^{213}\) Roger Whitlow in *Emerging University*, pg. 90

\(^{214}\) Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
who fought to free this country of a racist mentality, but because the rededication brought to this campus a certain consciousness, a consciousness of a yet unfulfilled task in human relations.\textsuperscript{215}

To learn that there was a collective body of people, people of all races and ethnicities fighting for the betterment of Black students was pretty refreshing. This student Union, which is centrally located on the campus, serves as the business and activity hub for visitors and guest. The impact and frequent use of this “memorial” would ultimately impact generations to come.

\textit{Gilbert C. Fite}

Doudna, after meeting with students in spring of 1970, made a promise to the students and made a public profession stating that; “if I didn’t meet the demands by fall of 1970 I would leave and let someone else try it.”\textsuperscript{216} Perhaps this accounts for the vast progress that was made during 1970 with the incorporation of the Black house, the hiring of Black faculty/staff and the implementation of the Afro-American Studies Program. By mid-April of 1970 all (original) demands were met or underway. However, Doudna announced his retirement and one year later, in April of 1971 the next president was named to the university. These celebrations were always well attended by the student leaders of AAA.

Gilbert Fite was named the fourth president of Eastern Illinois University. He received his doctorate from the University of Missouri at Columbia, like Ridgeway, and served as professor at the University of Oklahoma, like Franklin. Pullen, who by this time was working for Eastern, provided some background knowledge of Fite. He recalled:

\textsuperscript{215} Dr. Jimmie Franklin. \textit{The Eastern Alumnus}. March 1972. Vol. XXV. No. 4. P. 20
Fite, came here he was going to be, I hear the Secretary of Agriculture if McGovern had one, but he didn’t win. But Fite was Franklin’s advisor during his Ph.D. program at the University of Oklahoma. Fite came here and one of his advisees Mike Mullally he became athletic director and turned the athletic program around. I sat on a lot of committee selecting coaches and stuff because of my relationship with the Franklins. And Jimmy Franklin was the athletic rep and he and Mike Mullally worked together at Oklahoma. And Mike Mullally had brought this black dude, Herb Williams to play basketball, and Herb went to the junior college I had attended back in KY. Such a small world…  

A small world, but Eastern still seemed to have big problems that needed addressing.

Fite seemed prepared. In September 1971, during the Diamond Jubilee Event President Fite, stated the mission of his tenure:

I do not know what you have in mind for the future of Eastern Illinois University, but I will not be satisfied until it is recognized among the very best small universities in the United States. I declare here and now that true greatness for this University is my goal.

Student Robert Perry was a member of the University Presidential Search Committee who helped yield a unanimous vote from the Board of Governors to hired Fite. Along with Perry, a new generation of students was enrolled to Eastern. With some “foundational” issues established, the fighting was not yet done. Equipped with the skills in grassroots organizing, students rallied around various causes and presidential pressure ensued. Fite’s declaration of “true greatness” on the part of the university would be challenged on many fronts. The term of the fourth president would end in 1977.

**Campus Racial Climate 1967-1975**

Roger Whitlow, historian and Eastern professor writes of these times. As mentioned previously, he states that, “by the close of the sixties, more than forty percent of Eastern’s students still came from eighteen neighboring counties, and most of those students had never had any encounter with blacks.” This speaks to what

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217 Elmer Pullen personal interview with LaTasha Nesbitt, June 2010.
218 Donald Tingley, *Emerging University* p 134.
Anderson’s thoughts about feeling like an “invader” upon coming to Eastern (previously noted). Whitlow continues, “…Joining with the problem of the racial inexperience of white downstate students was the generally militant attitude of many urban black students who, in tune with national attitudes, preferred much of the time to remain among themselves.”

Considering the level of accomplishments that these “urban militant blacks” possessed, I am not certain they viewed their stance as problematic. Additionally, the desire to “remain among themselves” was often due to the level of comfort and safety they felt in light of the unwelcoming environment that persisted much of the time. Black students would face many challenges inside and outside the classroom. Nate Anderson captured the state of the climate at Eastern and around the nation:

Well, we were in 70s, so all the civil rights things that had been fought and riots had just ended this was the healing, so us being on campus, well you better treat us…you know, we still had the volatility in us so and people knew that. And we were just trying to get education. This was a time when because huh we actually grew up…my first choices for colleges, well what we knew in the 60s were black Universities. I knew more about Grambling, Tennessee State, Alcorn, Jackson State and all those schools more so because that’s where all of our teachers came from. And then to start branching out to schools like Eastern, Illinois State, Southern, U of I, Mizzou…[sic] you know, coming from the East St. Louis area, those things were different. This was a little above experimental. It was a real testing of how we had opened up some avenues for Blacks.

The opening of the “avenue” would not be a smooth ride. Still, it was a matter of adjusting to this new place, a world away from home. Marvinetta Woodley Penn, student during the early 70s, spoke candidly of some of her experiences:

It was really different being in all white classes. And having to…well, I think that I was fortunate in that I loved to read. And I loved doing schoolwork, so that was a plus for me. But it was really different having to sit…since I was an English major, I was the only black in most of my classes. So that was like a whole new world and I felt very intimidated, very unsure of myself…and I don’t want to say the wrong thing, I don’t want to seem dumb so a lot of time I would not say anything. And I really resented my teachers for not preparing me better.

Yvette-Moyo, too, understood this struggle. She spoke of her invisible presence:

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220 Nathaniel Anderson, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
221 Marvinetta Woodley Penn, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
I felt like I was invisible to white people. Like they would see me, but my presence...not only invisible but insignificant. And cause me to have to really adjust. So basically, it was like wow too many white people (laughs) and that I'm really here on my own and I better find and create some groups of African American if I'm going get through this or even understand it. Not, you know, even more important than getting through it was to understand how to maneuver in that kind of environment.  

As these students were adjusting to college life, the racism they experienced was profound. Marvinetta speaks to the racial climate as well, but does remember some white professors they were supportive. She states:

Oh my god, the racial climate was intense. Because this was '71 we had just gone through the Civil Rights Movement, we had just gone through integration, and we were militant. Black Power was all the rage. And oh my God, if a white person looked at you wrong you were ready to fight! Hmm because you felt that tension. There was so much overt racism! Even if it were not there, we interpreted everything as racist. Hmm. We kinda [sic] had a chip on our shoulder, I think. And it was almost as if certain people were bending over backwards, certain professors were overextending themselves to make us feel welcome. I remember several.

Yvette Jackson-Moyo made reference to some of the neighboring counties that Whitlow mentions regarding the inexperience of some whites with Blacks:

It was very negative regarding blacks here. Most people had never met anybody black because they usually came from the Decaturs [sic], you know, the areas around here where are usually farm towns. There were still...it was very new.

I created a black community once I found that I was really, that that was a natural thing for me to do. Then I created a black community that worked for me. And the community was very welcoming, cohesive. We said hello to each other when we saw each other.

In many cases the classroom environment was not a haven of hope. Many students shared, with a vividness that makes one believe the instances occurred most recently, about some of their classroom experiences. Marvinetta recalls:

I heard a professor say, one of the professors in an English class that I was having a hard time in say, I heard him say that he felt that all black people should be in slavery. And that if he had his way that all black people would be back in slavery. I was like, oh no I'm going to win because I love challenges! And then all of my friends were not doing the right things and kept saying it was hard. I was like no! Where, all my friends were like then I heard all of my friends complain of the challenges, I say not. It was like the middle of the first semester, I was like they are not going to stop me. I had made up in my mind. I just started studying more and started doing what I was supposed to do. Once I got past that first semester I was like, “they are not going to stop me.” So it was more like a challenge to myself.

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222 Yvette Jackson-Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
223 Marvinetta Woodley Penn, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
224 Yvette Jackson-Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
225 Marvinetta Woodley Penn, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
Nate had a similar experience:

Because you see, you had to adjust to culture in the classroom. See, I struggled originally huh just by and even sometime, particularly in English class. I had read The Iliad, The Odyssey, Moby Dick, all the… Tom Sawyers and Huckleberry Finn but that teacher was teaching a totally different way that I had…you get in front of the classroom and it’s only me and one other black and you talking about “Nigger Jim” I ain’t feeling too good. Now I’m all right at Lincoln (refers to his high school). They would ask you to read out loud. I’m not going be saying, “Nigger Jim.” I’m going to get mad. You know, and one woman gave me a zero. So you had to learn to adjust to the culture a little bit. And the teacher would say, “I don’t mean no harm.” Well it meant harm to me!

And the woman erased my two zeros and eventually knew where I was coming from. Then she instructed me on how to write it and all that, I mean, we weren’t dumb! You know, we actually got good basic education in school. Our culture was just different.  

Those feelings of isolation had been pretty typical for Blacks at predominantly white institutions. The classroom was supposedly a place where exchanges of ideas and concepts took place, in these instances turned out to be a place of fear, inferiority and intimidation. These circumstances, for most students, became breeding grounds to accomplish all the more.

During this time Yvette devised a plan for Marvinetta, herself and another friend, Lesyle, to graduate in 3 years instead of 4 years. She figured out the number of credits that were necessary for graduation and shared it with her friends:

…I had somehow figured out my numbers and all I needed was X number of credits and we could get out of here in 3 years. Like we were in jail (laughs), we can get out of here!

And the three of us, really best friends, did it. And we probably found that out in the middle of our sophomore year and were outta here. All graduated in 74, May ‘74. And we had 125 Black students graduate which is probably the biggest black student population that every graduated together in Eastern’s history.  

Nearly thirty percent of all the Black students, during the 1973-74 school year were slated for graduation. Yvette was right the graduation of 125 Black students at Eastern in 1973 was indeed record breaking. These students had faculty and staff that were committed to their success.

226 Nathaniel Anderson, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
227 Yvette Jackson--Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
In 1973, there were many highlights in the lives of Black students. With a quest to see the truth of the Black women validated, Marvinetta challenged her department with an editorial that was published in the school newspaper—Daily Eastern News. In her April 11, 1973 article entitle Why no Blacks in ‘Herstory’? She writes:

To the Editor:

Herstory, a theatre arts production to be put on this weekend is according to Eastern News “...a look at the American woman exploring her role from Eve to present.” Since the cast of Herstory is made up completely of white women, I think we ought to raise the question of what is an American woman?

Being a black woman in America, I feel it is an insult to have a play such as Herstory put on without any black female ancestor being represented by black women at Eastern’s campus. I know, being a theatre student myself, that there are many black students as qualified as any white student to portray the part of any character on Eastern’s theatre stage.

I also feel that it is very unfortunate that black talent here at Eastern is so stifled and overlooked because of the closeminded attitude of the department as far as black productions are concerned. I am going to see Herstory, but for one reason only, and that is to see how successfully Mr. Mannakee blotted out the past of my female ancestors.

Marvinetta M. Woodley (later Penn)228

Marvinetta, always cognizant of the power of the written word, felt it was important to challenge the status quo. The possible repercussions of this public challenge were never a thought in her mind. Her ability to vocalize with accuracy not only confronted the Theatre Department, but it was a challenge to herself as well as her peers to “create” change. Displeased with the amount of Black representation in the Theatre Department, Marvinetta, Yvette and a host of student actresses/actors put on their own productions. Dr. Rang, a theatre professor proved to be a valuable source in assisting these students make their vision a reality. Marvinetta spoke of this experience:

I wanted to put on my own production because I didn’t feel like there were enough black productions in the theatre department so I put on a play and he got the lab school for me and ran off all the scripts for me. I got the youth together. Dr. Rang helped me with every aspect of that

To say that Marvinetta was empowered by seeing video footage of herself and the other Black students on stage would be an understatement. These experiences at Eastern would lead Marvinetta after 35 years as a high school English teacher, to form her own performing arts organization for Black girls in the city of Chicago—Global Girls Inc. The organization thus far has traveled to share insightful performance throughout the Midwest as well as India, Liberia and Tanzania. Her exposure on Eastern’s stage had now impacted generations.

Another milestone occurred in 1973 with the implementation of the position of an Affirmative Action Director. In August of 1973, Fite appointed Dr. Franklin to be fulfill this role. Two years earlier the federal mandates required that all campuses have such offices. Franklin’s role was to be “responsible for establishing, maintaining and monitoring an effective program that will provide equal employment and promotion opportunities for minorities and women.”

Franklin dealt with many issues. In a July 31, 1975 correspondence, Franklin in communication with the Dean of the School of Education (Harry Merigis) expressed deep concerned over the lack of Black faculty in the entire school. He warned that the issue had been dealt with for five years prior but poses a tough question that had been posed to him. Franklin states:

“How is it that Sociology, History, Zoology, and other departments can attract blacks in the disciplines where the percentage of doctorates is small, and the School of Education, as large as it is, can not find a single black, although over 45% of all doctorates in this country held by blacks are in the field of Education?” It is a very good question.

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229 Marvinetta Woodley Penn, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
230 Warbler Yearbook, “President Fite honored at campus affairs” Student publication, P. 282.
231 Personal Correspondence from Dr. Jimmie Franklin to Dean Dr. Harry Merigis. 7/31/75.
Franklin, a no nonsense personality, concluded the letter with several examples and idea but left the department with the charge toward improvement of Black faculty. He stated, “...I want to make myself absolutely clear. After five years, I am not convinced that all departments in the School of Education have done all they can... ...I can see the results.” Mr. Merigis responded to the letter six days later and in short, he solicited Franklin’s help to lead in this effort. Admittedly, their experience with recruiting Blacks was limited and they were open to improved but wanted Franklin to know that his information about not hiring a single black was inaccurate. He reported that during the 1967-68 academic year Dorothy Simmons was hired as a faculty assistant. She was African American. Merigis said she was the first Black employee on the campus. Other records as provided earlier proved this information inaccurate.

After two years of serving in this capacity, Franklin resigned to make more time for his own research and teaching. Before the resignation, Franklin would have much work to do.

Queen Controversy

Before graduation, there was still work to be done. The month following the *Images of Ebony* production, Jackson-Moyo served as the president of Black Student Union (AAA had changed its name by then) and a member of the Student Senate. As a senator she was able to gain a fuller perspective on student life as well as provide some insight to the Black student community on strategies for advancement. It was the annual time for homecoming. Never before in the history of Eastern had there been a black homecoming queen. The students thought the time was now. Learning the

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232 Personal Correspondence from Dr. Jimmie Franklin to Dean Dr. Harry Merigis. 7/31/75.
233 Dr. Ann E Smith hired in 1960 was the first Black faculty. Personal Correspondence from Dean Dr. Harry Merigis to Dr. Jimmie Franklin to. 8/5/75.
intricacies of the voting process, Jackson-Moyo spoke with Black fraternities and sororities in order to run a candidate. The students desired a cause in which to celebrate. Yvette explains:

I was on the Student Senate, so I had a chance to see how many votes the Homecoming Queen got. It was like 290 votes. We have just over 300 students. If everybody, if everybody votes we could do it. And I did a very underground thing to put that out there. And the Kappa’s ran a candidate and we won. It was strictly based on being on the inside. Looking at the numbers, look at the numbers and we can do that. We did it so underground the University didn’t even see that coming and we won that election. Somebody accused us of leaving a flier within yards of the voting area, which was an infraction, and they took it away from us but someone else put that flier there because we knew the rules and we watched what we were doing. And they said our candidate was eliminated. She did win, but was eliminated due to impropriety in the election process. And we...

And we went to the pep rally with our own chant...and we drowned out the pep rally. We had our own chat-no, no; no you will not do this to us. And ended that. And we had meetings all through the night with the University to try resolve it, try to resolve it because homecoming is the next day. And they decided to not name any homecoming queen.

So look in that yearbook there’s a black page. I was president of the Black Student Union at that time. And my mom heard me on the radio from here. (Laughs) She said, “what are you doing?!?” laughs...

It was news. It became news that we may not have Homecoming. At the time I was doing a regular interview in Champaign, from Champaign-Urbana for a show. I can’t remember the name of the show. I can tell you what I was wearing on the show. I think it was David Brown was the moderator of the show. But I was going back and forth to Champaign for the show, every week. And I think that was one of the ways they heard what was happening and I got on the radio and it ended up on the news in Chicago. So that was that, Black Homecoming.

For these students, it was one of the first times they felt like they had won. Victory was not a common sentiment of the group. When the technicalities were explained they felt as if they had been sabotaged. It was never proven on what happened, but the stance the students took created history, no queen, so in retrospect they had won.

Pullen remembered the event, and even some 35 years after the event happened, there was still a sense of bitterness that lasted. He recalls:

She won. Due to a technically, supposedly about leaving some bullshit about leaving, excuse me, leaving some leaflet or something was left in an area it wasn’t suppose to. She had won, she had more votes, but due to this technicality they [the university officials] said she hadn’t. There were

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234 Yvette Jackson–Moyo, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, November 1, 2008, transcript.
some hot temperatures then. But we went to the administration and so no, this ain’t going to happen.\textsuperscript{235}

Though very similar to what both Pullen and Jackson-Moyo state, Franklin offers a faculty perspective:

Oh, Man, man, man that was bad…Gilbert Fite was the president at the time as you know the homecoming queen was elected. The black students had gotten together the fraternities and sororities got together. Which you want to aspects study, how we got organized because they did become somewhat of a political force on campus they could determine who got elected at the time. They decided on a young lady, whose name I can’t recall. I wrote a report, it should be in Fite’s files or my files. A long report so I will spare you the details. So this kid won and everybody was happy and then we get an appeal from the white girl who lost. By this time, the campus was in an uproar. And meetings were being held almost everywhere. Ridgeway called me one morning and I had been up all night, he said, “Man, you’re still at home, you’re not in that meeting?” I said, ”What meeting are you talking about?” I said why don’t I know about it, and he responded maybe they don’t want you to know about it. (Laughs). I said, well where is it? He said, ”It’s in the Union building?” I got up and there’s this meeting going on and I’m the director of Affirmative action. Head of the union building is up there Bill who I never trusted, who is a white guy of course. You just know when you shouldn’t say something. There was this young lady to my left, and she responded in a very flipped manner. I almost cursed here. But I didn’t. I said to the group, “Look this young women, this black women won this thing fair and square huh the opposition was out maneuvered and out financed and that’s it.” This had never happened before. I thing this was maybe at most a week before homecoming and the black students had a gathering at Coleman Hall. And I spoke to that group. I did what I always did; look I think an injustice will be done if she is not chosen as homecoming queen. There this a meeting that is going to …gymnasium… we went over to the gymnasium, but they backed off (laughs).

Not to name a homecoming queen was major. No there was some issues, that at least one person represented had violating one of the rule by approaching one of the balloting box. Fite and I had discussed that. The board of governors had requested a full-scale report on the homecoming queen controversy.\textsuperscript{236}

Through fierce negotiations and late night deliberations, Eastern for the first time in its’ history had no homecoming Queen. In 1973, instead of a Queen being announced and court of contestants were presented to the campus. Of this course was Diane Williams, the Black contestant.

The grassroots efforts and strategies that Jackson--Moyo help led were quite successful. The goal to crown a Black queen was not achieved, but impact of collective action among Black students groups as well as staff and administrative support further allowed the students to know they have a voice in the matters of the university. As

\textsuperscript{235} Elmer Pullen, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, June 10, 2010, transcript.
\textsuperscript{236} Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
many of the participants recalled the event with a bit of fury in their voices due to unfair judgments about the campaign literature, they do still realize the powerful impact of they had in creating history at Eastern in 1973.

As time went by, the Black community of Eastern grew larger. In comparison with the rest of the state, Eastern maintained a middle ground number with its' Black enrollment. As reflective in Table 4 below, in 1974, 6 percent of Blacks were at ISU, 3.7 percent at U of I, 7.2 percent at SIUC, 5.8 percent NIU and 5.2 percent at Eastern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Senior Universities</th>
<th>No. Of blacks</th>
<th>Percentage of Blacks</th>
<th>Total No. Of Students</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>EIU</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>8,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISU</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>17,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIU</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>19,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIUC</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>19,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U of I</td>
<td>1,299&lt;sup&gt;238&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>34,651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for growth, the percent of Black students at Illinois institutions during this time period ranged from approximately 4 to 7 percent in the mid-1970s. For the University of Illinois in particular, the number is representationally large, however, upon closer examination, the growth of the Black population remained rather stagnant as reflected in the research by Deirdre Cobb examining Black students at the U of I from

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1945-1955. She reports data for 1,400 Black students for that time period and here some thirty years later these numbers were actually lower. 239 I highlight U of I considering the proximity of the school to Eastern as well as their large recruitment efforts done through Project 500 in 1968.

Eastern, on the other hand, vastly increased its Black student population. Within a seven-year period (1967-1973), Eastern increased its Black student population to twelve times the original number. It went from 35 Black students in 1967 to approximately 420 Black students in 1973. More and more Black students were coming to Eastern. According to the participants who would come in the succeeding decades, Eastern seemed like a more enjoyable journey.

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CHAPTER 6
LIFE AT EASTERN, 1976-1982

Biographies of Participants

The last wave of students in which I research are those who attended Eastern Illinois University from 1976 until 1982. This period at Eastern was less eventful in comparison to the last studied period, but is largely reflective of the expansive ideas of neo-conservatism throughout the nation. Hence, there were a fewer instances that impacted the social climate and race relations on campus and within Charleston. I will explore those in the latter part of the chapter. In former part of this chapter I will provide an introduction of the narrators who attended Eastern during this wave.

Table 5: 1976-1982 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>TIME OF TENURE</th>
<th>HOMETOWN</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dr. Kelvin Lane</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1976-79</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cecilia Brinker</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1976-82</td>
<td>East St. Louis</td>
<td>Student/Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Almetris Snulligan-Stanley</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1979-84</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Clifton Graham Jr</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1981-85</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dr. Mona Davenport</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1980-85</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Student/Faculty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this chapter, five Eastern Alumnus provide reflections of their experiences: Dr. Kelvin Lane, Almetris Snulligan-Stanley, Clifton Graham Jr., Cecilia Brinker, and Dr. Mona Davenport. Another noted faculty member, Johnetta Jones, would also be formally introduced in this section as she proved to be an instrumental force in the lives of Black students for multiple generations. Drs. Franklin and Ridgeway (introduced in earlier sections) will be referenced throughout the text because of their influential roles as they sought to better the condition of Blacks at Eastern and abroad.
Johnetta Jones

Johnetta Jones was initially hired at Eastern to the African American Studies Program in the fall of 1977. She later became the Director of Minority Admissions Program (MAP), which later changed its name to the Gateway Program in 1990. Jones has remained instrumental in impacting change at Eastern and the surrounding communities. Jones was born and raised in Carbondale, Illinois served as the fourth director of the Afro-American Studies Program at Eastern from 1977 until her untimely death in October of 2003. Prior to joining Eastern, Jones was a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Kent State University in Ohio. She was active in the campus community but also served on many regional and state boards and committees, including the Illinois Council for Black Studies. As will be later discussed, Jones had a unique way of urging students to succeed. Her holistic approach in helping students academically and personally was a staple feature for Eastern students for nearly three decades. Her work has left an indelible mark on countless students and many colleagues.

Dr. Kelvin “Kool-Aid” Lane

After attending Luke Junior College (currently Harold Washington College) for one year, Lane received a full three-year tuition award from former State District Representative Harold Washington to attend Eastern Illinois University. He chose Eastern through a process of elimination. He shares, “Southern was too far, Northern was too close, had brothers that went both to Illinois State and Western and U of I was too big.” Lane attended Eastern from fall of 1976 and graduated in the summer of

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240 Kelvin Lane, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, Nov 1, 2008 & December 21, 2013, transcript.
While attending Eastern, Lane served as Vice President of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated. Since then, he has maintained an active relationship with the institution through attending Black Student Reunion events as well becoming a financial contributor to the fraternity chapter and the school at large. While attending Eastern, in addition to fraternity involvement, Lane worked in the cafeteria and he also worked as desk clerk in Taylor Hall. He was the first Black to serve in the latter capacity. Overall, Lane’s transition to Eastern was “smooth” as he spoke about multiple experiences where he was the token representative. Growing up, Lane’s mother was extremely active as a member of the United Methodist Church and he would attend her speaking engagements and summer campus where he would be the only Black student in attendance. These experiences served as a buffer to some of the experiences he would later witness at Eastern.

Currently Lane works in the educational sector and plans to retire in December of 2014. He works as an Educational Discipline Coordinator in the Buffalo Groves School District in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. He contributes his success at Eastern to his mother, as she was the only one of her siblings to complete college and Lane knew that his completion at Eastern would satisfy her as much as it would him. The completion of his Ph.D. some several years later was attributed to her was well.

Lane’s was the first to recount the negative experience of his fraternity the rumor of rape. In searching for archive for the original article regarding his fraternity I could not locate it. In fact it had been deleted from the universities history. This let me know immediately how administrators or anybody go to lengths to ensure the reputation of the institution is maintained.
Almetris Snulligan-Stanley

During my first Black Alumni Reunion weekend experience, I had the opportunity to interview Almetris; it was in November of 2008. Her willingness to share her story was remarkably awesome. Her sweet spirit proved to enlighten my experience as a researcher and as an Eastern alumna.

Almetris attended Eastern from 1979 to 1984. Of her nine siblings, she was the first to graduate high school. Influenced greatly by her sister-in-law, Linda, who served as her mentor, Almetris first became convinced of the reality of college. Almetris recalled that initial conversation: “My sister-in-law told me I was going to college. I said, “Well what? I’mma do what?!” She said, “You are going to college.” I said, “What makes you think I’m going to college? We just do high school in this family.” And she said, “…no, you’re going to go!” Following this conversation they went to the local library and began the college application process. During that time they completed three applications and Eastern was the first school that admitted Almetris. Months later, Almetris entered Eastern and made her transition into college life. For the first time, Almetris realized the impact Linda had on her life and midway through the interview, she broke down in tears. Misty-eyed and a bit choked up, Almetris uttered this sentence, “Linda saw something in me, she gave me hope!” After a brief moment to regain her composure she continued, “Linda encouraged me to go to school and she stuck with me the whole time. She even came here and would visit me and call me.”

Ultimately, Almetris completed two Bachelors degree in Food & Nutrition and Fashion Design and a minor in Business Administration. She described her overall experience at Eastern as quite pleasant. She was involved in the two organizations,

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241 Almetris Snulligan-Stanley, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, Nov 1, 2008, transcript.
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated and the Black Student Union. Living on the West Side of Chicago her entire life, coming to Charleston was definitely a culture shock, but the transition seemed to happen quickly for Almetris.

Due to overcrowding and high enrollment, once Almetris arrived to campus she was informed that on campus housing was not available and was forced to live off campus. The housing experience was still largely segregated off campus, but on campus Almetris experienced a smooth process. Her level of comfort was great considering two of the three female students she roomed with were from the Chicago area, so the sharing of commonalities helps to make the process smoother. Overall, Almetris loved her days at Eastern and both her son and nephew are recent graduates of the institution as well.

In all Almetris contributes her success at Eastern to the mentorship from her sister-in-law Linda. The socio-emotional care that was provided to Almetris, with the optimism she possessed, aided in her successful matriculation at Eastern. Currently, Almetris is Executive Director of the Westside Youth Technical Entrepreneur Center (WYTEC), is a technology driven after-school program geared towards at-risk students. Most recently WYTEC recently received a $5 million dollar grant to expand their program. Almetris’ commitment to the students she sees each day is because of the hope that was instilled in her while at Eastern from Linda.

Clifton Graham Jr.

Clifton Graham Jr. attended Eastern from 1981-1985. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Marketing. He came back to complete graduate school in 1987 with a Masters in Business Administration. His soon-to-be wife attended the university alongside him. Their support one to another was instrumental in aiding his
smooth transition from Chicago to Charleston. Perhaps this spousal support assisted Graham in his transition from Chicago to Charleston.

Clifton served as President of the Black Student Union while attending Eastern. He was also a member of the Student Senate and played on the Tennis Team. Later he was inducted as a member into Delta Sigma Pi, a business fraternity. His unique experiences in organizations that were mostly Black and then those that were predominantly white allowed Graham an array of experiences. Overall, this Chicago native had a great experience at Eastern. He speaks highly of Eastern and has endorsed it so that his daughter is now a graduate.

When recalling his initial thoughts upon entering Eastern he recalled, “I was very happy, it was one of the greatest times of my life!” Unlike some students of the previous era, Graham remembered that the people in Charleston and the University were very welcoming and he had “not one problem!” On campus, when considering what contributed to his success at the university Graham spoke largely about his experience with the Black Student Union. He stated, “it made me more aware of my Black history.” This gave him the strength to endure any challenge. Grahams currently owns his own investment company called Henderson & Graham Investment Group LLC in Country Club Hills, Illinois.

Cecilia Brinker

Affectionately known as “Cece,” Ms. Brinker has been a staple at the Eastern Illinois University for nearly the last four decades. Beginning as an undergraduate student in 1976, Brinker now directly impacts the caliber of student life at Eastern as the Director of Student Life.
Upon leaving East St. Louis, Brinker was not sure that college was here “strong suit,” but said she discussed the option of becoming another statistic by being a single Black woman with children or going to college. She chose the latter. Upon coming to Eastern from East St. Louis, like many other students there was the initial shock with the environmental differences. The presence of cornfields and open land was much different than the urban region of East St. Louis.

While attending Eastern, Brinker was one of the first (there were two) Black women to gain admission to the Women’s Basketball Team. She was the first to integrate the varsity team and the other student, the junior varsity team. With no formal training, Brinker was able to help led the team to achieve great success. Though she was a member of the Black Student Union, her involvement with intercollegiate and intramural sports kept her busy.

Because she had not played structured basketball prior to college, Brinker described it as a “learning curve.” Hence, she would spend most of her time attempting to master the sport and less time on her studies. Soon, her grades suffered and two years after entering Eastern she was academically dismissed. Her poor academics performance coupled with financial woes was something that could no longer be ignored. Instead of returning to her hometown, Brinker worked various jobs doing odds and ends to pay her bill and eventually reapplied to the university. After two more years, she was readmitted and completed her undergraduate degree in 1982 and her graduate degree in 1985. She majored in Physical and Health Education. Her Master of Arts degree is in Student Personnel and Higher Education.

Brinker has remained in Charleston from the time she was dropped off by her mother and brothers in fall of 1976. She is the current Director of Student Life where she
oversees program development that provides student leadership opportunities and promotes cultural awareness.

*Dr. Mona Y. Davenport*

Influenced early during the rides from Chicago to Eastern to drop off her sister Dana, Mona soon became infatuated with the idea of college and attending Eastern. In 1980, she began her freshmen year. Reared in a family whose educational expectations of college were the norm, Mona would continue to excel in her academic endeavors. She started Eastern majoring in Sociology. Upon taking classes in Afro-American Studies, with Ms. Jones she added another additional major. Now, double majoring in both Sociology and Afro-American Studies Mona completed her undergraduate career in five years. In 1985 Mona headed to Chicago to work with Silas Purnell at the Abraham Lincoln Center for 5 years. It was there when she decided she wanted to gain more proficiency in counseling and took a one-year sabbatical from work to obtained her Master of Arts degree in Guidance and Counseling. In 1990, Ms. Jones had worked to establish the Minority Admissions Program (MAP) and she called Mona to serves as a counselor. Mona worked in that capacity for seven years and wanted to increase her learning. She left for Governors State University in 1997 to work with seniors and graduate students at the TRIO\(^{242}\) program until 2001.

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\(^{242}\) See TRIOs National Website-http://trio.utsa.edu/about/history-of-trio-programs/- the history of the TRIO programs. It states, “The term "TRIO" was coined in the late 1960's to describe three federally-funded educational opportunity outreach programs. The three original TRIO programs included Upward Bound (the oldest of the programs), which emerged out of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 in response to the administration’s War on Poverty; Educational Talent Search, which was created as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965; and Student Support Services, which was included in the Higher Education Amendments of 1968.”
However, with a thirst to gain more knowledge she enrolled at Illinois State University and started her Ph.D. program in Higher Education in the fall of 2001. During her dissertation and data collection process she received a call from then President Lou Hencken making her aware of the sudden death of Johnetta Jones. Hencken requested that Mona served as Interim Director of Minority Student Affairs. She agreed to work and later along with other candidates interviewed for the position. Davenport was successful in gaining the position and now has served as the Director of Minority Student Affairs at Eastern for the last ten years.

Campus Chronicles

In the second part of this chapter I document some of the key happenings at Eastern that directly and indirectly impacted Black student life from the mid-1970s through the 1980s. Some issues I highlight include the development of the Affirmative Action Plan, racist accusations against a Black fraternity, the connection between athletics and race and finally the continual development of the Afro-American Studies Program. These topics will be interwoven with conversations from participants about their journeys at Eastern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEARS</th>
<th>WHITES</th>
<th>BLACKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>9,243</td>
<td>631</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>9,484</td>
<td>629</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>9,716</td>
<td>615</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>9,904</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>9,792</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information garnered from Affirmative Action Plan of 1976
As reflective in the abovementioned chart, during this time the Black population at Eastern had grown from the measly 35 Black students and had remained stable in the mid-to-low 500 to 600 hundreds. By 1976, more Black organizations were formulating than ever before. Each of the nine Black fraternities and sororities was represented, in addition to these there were various dance groups and other social auxiliary groups that were establishing and thriving.244 Moreover, Black students were still enrolling at Eastern. Many came from as close as Springfield, Rantoul, Edwardsville, St. Louis, Danville, Decatur, Champaign and Chicago Heights, other students were hailing from places as far away as Nigeria, Ghana and the Congo.

This next decade at Eastern would witness the presence of the militancy and forthrightness activists like Stokely Carmichael, Angela Davis and Dick Gregory. Stokely with his focus on destructive impact of capitalism packed the Union ballroom in what the Warbler calls an “impromptu” visit.245 Angela Davis’ lecture focused on the worsening impact of campus oppression. She believed students were not apathetic but instead controlled and disunited. She stated, “what I see is a return to 1961 and 1963 when I was a student, and three weren’t many students of color on any of the campuses across the country”246 Wrapping up this era, Gregory, known for his forthrightness and humor, called “for honesty and unity between all races.” 247

According to some of the participants the social climate was nice and conducive for learning and growing. In 1976 both Almetris and Cece were gearing up to begin their collegiate careers. Both of these first generation college students were excited and

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244 Each of the nine fraternities and sororities plus their women’s auxiliary groups were there. Additional to this were social groups like the The Cassanova, The Novettes, Wanafunzi Afri-Jamaa, Wine Psi Phi, Groove Phi Groove, Gamma Phi Psi.
245 “Carmichael cuts capitalism” 1977 Warbler p. 130. The Afro-American Studies Program sponsored this speech.
246 “Campus oppression getting worse,” Eastern News, April 26, 1977
ready to take on this new challenge of independent life. Almetris with the support of Linda and Cece with the knowledge of a neighborhood friend, who had come to Eastern the year prior, had stepped into a new world. Both in a quandary of where they would live, as when they arrived on campus they were notified that housing was no longer available due to over enrollment.

Almetris once notified that she would have to seek off campus of University Apartment due to overcrowding issues. Once she arrived to her new apartment she felt immediately at ease knowing that two of the three roommates were from Chicago as well. This familiarity would help make the transition a bit smoother.

Cece, on the other hand, was placed in one of the lounge spaces in one of the dormitories. She roomed with three other students. An interracial group, Cece said that her experience was still a good one. Her only complaint was at night because the dorm did not have windows and lighting, adequate ventilation was not available.

Other than what they both describe as a ‘mishap’ with their housing, Cece and Almetris was excited about Eastern. Cece, when recalling her initial thoughts upon arriving, gleamed with nostalgic excitement. Though it was a bit of a culture shock maneuvering from the urban areas of East St. Louis to the grazing pastures of Charleston’s cornfields, it was a joyous time in Cece’s life. She states:

…I was still so impressed with the school. Not having been around and associating with colleges, Eastern still stood out to me as this big massive impressive institution of higher learning. So for me, even though the culture shock was there the institution was breathtaking. To think that here I was going off on my own to pursue a college education. Wow. I was excited about it!”

Almetris was just as enthused. Excited that the housing situation worked in her favor she recalls that experience:

Thank God it worked out very well! Two of the other females were from Chicago and huh it really worked out for me. It really encouraged me to be more independent, I had to get a job and to cook my own food so it was a growing experience. It was a definite learning experience outside the classroom so I really enjoyed the transition process of getting to know the other
students who were sharing the living space with me.

Both enjoyed their transition process and saw it as a time to grow instead of a time of frustration. The enjoyed their transition processes and embraced the Black community of people. When asked to describe the community three of the participants used “closed-knit.” They said:

[Almetris]...We were very close knit, really communicated quite well within our little groups. I would say the racial climate was quite positive for me. I didn’t have any issues during my years here at Eastern.

[Cece] ...the one thing I really liked about the campus climate was the black community was very close knit. It wasn’t difficult to meet and interact. The Greeks had a lot to do with that because they were in themselves families, and they were very involved they were very visible. I remember living in Carmen; the Sigmas were always in Carmen Hall. Everybody knew the Sigmas because they lived in the apartments that were right next to us and made themselves very involved and visible. So there was a very strong sense of community among blacks. At the time I didn’t realize that that was a separation.

[Kelvin] We were very close knit. Always spoke even when we didn’t know each other even if you didn’t know each other. We felt a need to unify. Even with the Greek organizations were tight.

It was great to see the level of consistency among some of the responses of the participants. Their responses did however reveal their level of interdependence on one another for community and support instead of seeking support from outside entities such as counselors, professors, and other university officials. In the classroom, Almetris’ perceived her classroom environment to be just as good. In speaking of her professors she stated:

They were all positive impressions. They were very supportive. They were encouraging. It was just like apart of my extended family. It was really, huh, small classroom atmosphere. I just really enjoyed the supportive nature of the classroom learning so that was really, really a big help for me in the educational environment here at Eastern; It was very, very supportive.

Almetris further described a specific experience in her Economics class:

My first experience, or the professor that vividly stands out in my mind was my Econ professor and his name was Professor Leninghan. That was my first experience in being in a huge auditorium, like auditorium style, like 200 kids in the class. I remember enjoying that class. He was always available on one-on-one support. That really encouraged me you know, to do my best in the class...
Cece on the other hand, experienced the classroom environment quite differently and was able to recall it without much hesitation:

Even though I knew I was minority, I didn’t have that sense of feeling like I was a minority when I first got here. The sense of feeling like a minority came into play when I was in the classroom. And that’s when it hit home.

This feeling of isolation came while in English. Cece describes and says:

…I had an English teacher and actually he retired not too long ago. …I had so many red marks on my English composition, and a lot of it was grammatical a lot of it. I had always considered myself a very creative writer. And I had professors later that said, ‘you’re very good at creative writing, you should think about writing.’ But I had gotten so turned off from that particular experience with that professor. And it wasn’t so much in him critiquing it was the fact that there was no interest in helping.

Cece makes the distinction here regarding academic ability versus the social capital or support that she lacked while in the classroom. She continued:

So and the expectation that I think college professors had of minorities, ‘you chose this school and entered here, so evidently you have the skills to be successful.’ So they weren’t too lenient that they didn’t think you didn’t have those skills and they weren’t very helpful. So a lot of times my stuff got marked up and I didn’t have any idea why or how to correct it. And I didn’t know any of those resources that could help me do, so I accepted stuff as if I were a poor student because I really didn’t know how to translate that to, “I need help with this,” “What could I do better?” I didn’t have the maturity at the time to say, “this isn’t acceptable to me, so I’m going to go over here and find somebody to help me improve this.” I accepted it as, “you’re just not a very good writer, you’re just not a very good student,” hence you get a D out of this class.

The impact of a professor’s word, or silence in this case, created in Cece this lack of academic aptitude. The academic support in the classroom for Cece was not present and she was confused as to how and fix it. Soon this and other issues concerning basketball would negatively impact her status as a student.

But when you’re the only minority in the class, there’s not a lot of interest in reaching out to you. There’s not a lot of interest. I don’t feel like he was point, or singling me out, but at the same time I think there was the expectation, “well okay, well you’re in my class, I don’t expect a lot out of you, and here’s the grade that you’re gonna get.”

Cece recognized these instances in English as well as in Sociology and all other classes that were considered “academic.” These situations did not necessarily occur in areas related to physical education. Cece did not know how to actively seek out the help she
needed, resulting in her internalizing notions of failure and not being a good student. Being the only Black student in the class took its toll and finally these things, coupled with a professed lack of discipline during her undergraduate years, caused her to be dismissed from the university.

Back then, students of color when we needed help we didn’t always go out of find it. There was not a lot of help. You didn’t feel the importance of finding help. Especially being in the community where you were the minority and it was a totally different environment for you to be fitting in in the first place. You just trying to fit in and pretend that everything worked for you like everybody else and it really wasn’t. Well, at least for me it wasn’t and I was pretending like it was. Especially in classes that I just didn’t do very well in.

Cece speaks of what many Black students at Eastern felt—frustration at the lack of help available and feeling a sense of grave isolation. While some students were able to maneuver seamlessly through the terrain of Eastern many still were convinced that more faculty and staff were needed that would be actively engaged in helping Black students succeed. Eastern was retaining more students of color and was progressing in that way, but still it had more growing to do.

Affirmative Action

*There is no place on Eastern’s campus for discrimination based on any consideration except professional performance. Not only is Eastern Illinois University pledged to a policy of non-discrimination, but the university will continue to move affirmatively in those areas which require corrective measures. I urge the cooperation of the entire university community in our resolute effort to reach those goals, which are commensurate with fair play and equal opportunity for all. We should act decisively not simply because the law dictates it, but because it is right.*

During 1976 while Dr. Franklin served as the Director for Affirmative Action he was able to complete a plan. This plan was finalized in 1976 then again revised slightly in 1981. The goal of the plan was to implement various policies and procedures on the part of the university to engage in further practices of hiring and retaining more female and minority faculty. During our interview Franklin was able to speak to this subject:

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We set our goals and timetables and we achieved a number of those, especially in terms of getting more students....Just after I left the affirmative action officer, I believe we had 700 black students at Eastern at that time. I believe we had more black students, percentage wise than any other in our school in our group-Board of Governors University. I don’t think we were higher than the University of Illinois, probably not, but the point is it was not only due to the affirmative action plan that I had done, but we have a white Vice President there, name Glen Williams, after Glen and I had a serious confrontation once he got his heart straight and when out and made discreet contacts with people who knew in Chicago. A great majority of Black students were from where? Cook County, probably 50-60%. We had a pipeline, pipeline. I remember Glen and I sat down one day and talked about how we were going to pull this thing off and he really pushed about doing it, I just devised a plan for getting more students. He pulled it off, he was very, very more successful.249

Setting a precedence to include a certain amount of Black students and faculty was critical in the partnership of Franklin and Glenn Williams who served Vice President of Student Affairs. In the last section, Elmer Pullen confirms about how Williams would collaborate with individuals like Silas Purnell out of Chicago to recruit more Black students from that area.

Even though Dr. Franklin resigned as Director of Affirmative Action his development of the university’s first Affirmative Action Plan was an essential feature that allowed the university to realize what needed change. The plan entailed a plethora of quantitative figures and narrative data with specific regard to the status and continual effort that would be needed to help Eastern truly extend to those minority job candidates what it meant to be an “equal employment opportunity” institution. While Eastern stood in average standing with the numbers of minority faculty hired throughout the state of Illinois, there was enormous room for vast improvement. Below you will see several statewide figures of minority employment during the fall 1977.

249 Jimmie Franklin, interview by LaTasha Nesbitt, April 20, 2010, transcript.
The Concerned Citizens of Charleston (CCC) proved to be a community entity that directly improved the lives of EIU students and faculty by the implementation of scholarships and other measures of advocacy. In April of 1976 the CCC wrote a letter to the search committee for the Director of Financial Aid and expressed many concerns. In an effort to make the selections committee aware of its need for accountability the CCC not only hoped they chose the best candidate but trusted that the candidate they chose would “have a keen sense of justice and fair play, and who has an unshakeable faith in basic constitutional guarantees, particularly the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment.” This was serious business. The CCC would be intricately involved in such matters. Drs. Ridgeway and Franklin were key leaders in this organization during their tenure at Charleston and at the university. Franklin’s wife, Golda, explained it in these terms:

It was…to go to Mississippi to University to Oklahoma and to come to Charleston, you know, there was no black population in Charleston. Only Mrs. Norton was there. And what, there were only two, you(points to her husband) Ridgeway, Foreman and Library Science, Frances Pollard.

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250 Information garnered from Affirmative Action Plan.
251 Professors and their spouses established CCC in Charleston, IL originally in the early 1970s. Soon more individuals who joined the campus faculty were added to the ranks. The major goal of CCC to provide an outlet and be a measure of support for students at faculty alike. Personal files of Dr. Jimmie Franklin.
252 April 13, 1976 Correspondence to Dr. Mary P. Rogers, Search Committee Chairperson from CCC. Personal Files of Dr. Franklin.
It was a very interesting time, considering we had two kids. It was a great university town. A great town to rear kids and they have a great school system, but still, still, it was breaking the ice.

[Franklin] Overtime Black more Blacks came who were not associated with the University, the Alexanders, Golda and his wife were very close. We were a very close-knit community. So we found a support system and eventually formed a group called the Concern Citizens of Charleston.

While not immediate, efforts were made to fine tune admissions policies as well as increase recruitment efforts. But groups like CCC and individuals like Franklin and Ridgeway were consistent in maintaining correspondence with the President and key official to ensure this need was met and remained at the fore as a goal in which to improve.

Admissions Policy Talk

Frustrated with the amount of students who came to his classes unskilled, Math professor LeDuc started a petition to increase the ACT requirement to a 15. His prior experiential research indicated that those with a composite score of 14 or below had dropped out or was on some level of academic probation. He approached the Council on Academic Affairs (CAA) in the fall of 1976 with his proposal, which was dismissed. While some administrative staff agreed with various alterations of the proposal, Vice President of Student Affairs Glenn Williams thought the decision would be detrimental. He believed that a plan of this nature would negatively decrease admissions generally, yet specifically be viewed as discriminatory understanding that most of the students that would be impacted by this adjustment would be minority students. Instead, the administrators agreed to implement more remedial level classes for students who were ill prepared to be successful in a typical college classroom. These remedial classes happened for the first time during the fall of 1976. English 1000 was one of the first

253 “Drawing the Line 1977 Warbler p. 82,”
classes to undergo this change. Approximately 200 students were enrolled in these courses. Students seemed to appreciate the slower pace classroom environment.

When interviewed about the remedial English course Professor Sharon Pearson discussed that not every student she encountered was incapable or unwilling to do the work necessary to successfully complete English, but she alluded to the fact that there were more issues in the Chicago school system that ultimately impacted a student required to enroll in her remedial class. She states: “Most of us cannot even imagine what goes on in (Chicago inner) schools.” Of all the, this seemed to be one of the only instances where the administrators had taken an initiative in that would possibly increase the likelihood of [Black] students’ success without the leadership of students. Perhaps the gentle prods by CCC were finally working.

Social and Racial Climate at Eastern from 1976-1982

Cece believed that this experience with her English professor had a lot to do with her race because she recalled many instances where this same professor would spend time providing feedback and explaining various assignments to her white counterparts. Still though, Cece had other experiences with whites that were much more positive for her. During one Thanksgiving break Cece decided that she would not go home and instead visit a home of one of her basketball teammates in Oblong, Illinois. Her teammate lived on a farm. Growing up in East St. Louis, this would be more of a culture shock than coming to Charleston proved to be. Cece stated:

Now I remember she took me home to visit her parents. It was like, Sydney Poitier, “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?!” She was from a rural community, I never heard of, and we got along great!

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254 Ibid. p. 83
In asking what that experience was like, Cece responded:

   Her name was Rhonda Musgrave. Hmm., it was different because I had never been on a farm. But I had had a teammate that took me to Arcola to her house, too. Her parents were very hospitable. I felt a little uncomfortable only because I felt like, “this is really different.” But they were very welcoming, very down to earth, a traditional, close family. For me, I just had to get used to, “this is different.” Seeing cows up-close, farm utensils and utilities and learning their way of life, it was just totally different from me and of course they are interested in me. Because I’m sure this is the first time they had ever had any kind of interaction with someone of color. So, both of those experiences were positive. They were a little awkward, yet very positive.

To be invited to a personal space outside of dormitory living was an intentional choice on the part of Cece and her teammates. To expose her family and extended family to a Black woman was definitely a new experience for them and to be exposed to rural farm life up-close was a unique experience for Cece. The learning process that extended outside of the classroom was definitely at work here. As for the overall campus, there was some level of improvement; however, the sense of community that had formulated among the Black population did not instantaneously eradicate all problems and concerns for Black students.

   In April of 1977, Eastern’s fourth president, after serving only five years would end his tenure. President Fite headed to assume a professorship of history at the University of Georgia. By February of 1977, Eastern’s youngest President, Daniel Marvin at 39, assumed office. He would serve throughout the duration of the 1980s. After retiring in June 1983, Marvin worked in the private sector. During his tenure, Marvin would have multiple issues in which to tackle. Still, some of the same concerns of decades past persisted. Though mostly a calm racial atmosphere, there were some experiences where race had not played out as peacefully as Cece had witnessed during her visit to her teammates farm.

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On Wednesday, April 27th, 1977 as Dr. Kelvin Lane and the rest of his Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated pledge brothers was completing the last day of their 13th week process of learning about the history, customs and traditions of the organization. Upon entering campus, the group received word that a member of the university has spread a vicious rumor around campus regarding the groups’ desire to rape of a white coed. The rumor suggested that in order for Lane and his colleagues to receive full membership into the organization they were to rape a white girl. The organization has had no such tradition at Eastern or elsewhere and the allegations were utterly false. Dr. Franklin served as the advisor for the Fraternity and knew of no such matter. However, once the rumor spread throughout campus the Vice President of Student Affairs Glenn Williams, ordered that the campus be shut down just before the alleged “rape” was suppose to occur. Dr. Franklin recalled this tenuous time:

Once Williams came and once he had heard of this rape rumor he called the dorms and arranged a lock down. Pretty soon this notion was supposed to take place. I was absolutely furious because he hadn’t done any background. I called him and told him about it. I then said, “Glen, I am very surprised at you. Do you know your precipitous actions could get people killed? I mean you ordered this lock down and operated on the assumption that what you were talking about is true, and if this gets out in a predominantly all white community you could see more guns on this campus than you can collect.” Within about 3-4 minutes Glen Williams was in my office apologizing. I said, well Glenn, this is a terrible, terrible mistake.

This seemingly calm environment of racial incidences brewed to a boiling point of no return. Lane, like Franklin, thought it was a terrible time at Eastern. He remembered heading to campus once he heard of the rumor but faced with an almost angry mob of white fraternity members, Lane and his colleagues had to think of a plan B and fast. Lane vividly recalled:

Upon coming to campus the white students who has heard this [the rape rumor] were waiting for us. Some of the men there standing had a bricks and a paddle in both hands. White fraternities were standing with standing with ax hammers waiting on the Black students to come on campus. They were all fired up to kick our asses! We were able to get two cars and drove to where they needed to be instead of walking.
The scene Lane described resembled that of a riotous race-based movie. As the Black fraternity pledge members escaped the crowd, they were able to complete their “coming out show” in the privacy of friends and other allies instead of near those that threatened their lives. The issue was far from over. The next day, on page 5 of the *Daily Eastern News* there was a picture of four Black males marching in a single-file line wearing black tuxedos with black beret hats, a gold shirt, an Ashcroft around their necks, and dark sunglasses. They carried a black brick and paddles. Each were labeled with black writing—‘A Phi?’ As they marched down the street a group of white men threw bottles at them.

The next day the newspaper headline read something to this effect: “For Black Fraternity to Go Active, they have to Rape a White Girl.” The community was in an uproar. The Blacks were angered by such a vicious rumor and whites felt threatened by the very presence of Black students, Black males in particular. The next day the university was flooded with phone calls from parents from both sides of the spectrum trying to understand why something so preposterous happened on Eastern’s campus. After much pressure from the BSU and other members of the Black community the editor of the school newspaper, *The (Daily) Eastern News*, was fired. But the dye was cast. The firing of the editor could not quell the fury surrounding the incident.

At the time of the incident, Franklin was interviewed and provided his perspective on the issue, he stated, “the whole situation is related to historical prejudices. This is not dynamite, it’s an atomic bomb! The university’s handling of such matters was a “total screw-up!” This is not just an affront to the black students and all students in general.\(^{256}\)

The climate was chaotic and tension was rising. Cece remembers being in the midst of it all, she recalls:

White students were scared to death to go outside. They were calling their parents all upset. The fraternities and the black community was all upset because for one, they didn’t even know where the rumor was coming from and DEN (the school newspaper) at the time was flaming it. So not only was the rumor being spread like wild fire and students were believing it, the newspaper printed and fanned the flames by putting it out there almost as if it were the truth. That caused a huge divide between the blacks and white students on this campus. And it got racial because the DEN played it out. It got played out more and more in the newspaper. They would go and interview white students who were saying, “I’m afraid to go out at night by myself, because I heard rumors that I might get rape.” And they would go and interview blacks students who were fraternity members who would say, “that’s ridiculous!” But if they walked down the sidewalk other students would see them with their (greek) letters on and turn the other way. It was a lot of racial divide and a lot of racial tension over that issue. And it didn’t subside very well from what I can’t tell. It was out there quite a while. The students were ready to riot and ready to march on Old Main (the administration building). The black administrators where trying to calm them down.

This incident gave white students a reason to not trust black students that were on campus that much more. And the black students were offended because they were alienation and the treatment. You had black and white students who were once friends not getting along because of this issue. They found their friendships being strained. You found more roommate issues really being strained. It was just a really bad time. And I can’t even tell you how it resolved itself. I mean it took a lot of work and effort on the part of people to sit down and have dialogue because it was so polarizing and then it would spill over into the community. So you have community people talking about locking their doors, “we’re a community and we never lock our doors and now we have to lock our doors!” So if you went out into the community you stepped into this tension. Typically the tension that was raised from that just raised a bigger, uglier picture. The students of color didn’t feel comfortable in Charleston, it raised a bigger issue of how they didn’t feel wanted in Charleston or at Eastern. Typically when instances like this were brought up the bigger picture was always going back to the racial climate of the university, the bigger picture of the university, “They don’t want us here, I don’t feel welcomed here.” So it didn’t matter what ignited it, it might have been the rape rumor, it might have been...

Cece was right there in the midst of it all. When considering roommate issues and she felt many students resorted back to the notion of not being welcomed on Eastern’s campus or the Charleston community.

Approximately 50 members of BSU, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated and other Blacks groups were present on the quad and demanded an apology from the university’s administrators. President Marvin provided a personal apology stating, “I personally apologize to the entire university community that this situation affected. I am damn sorry that this happened.”257 About one week later an anonymous writer

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257 Ibid.
wrote to the Eastern News expressing how she too wanted to offer an apology. She discussed how as she watched previous interracial relations on campus between various groups of students, it provided her with a sense of hope for a better tomorrow. However, after the events of the previous week she second-guessed her original thoughts. The anonymous writer wrote, “But with that, people who have “problems” and react like they did this past week it is going to take a long, long time for the world to have racial peace. So I once again offer my apologies to all blacks here at Eastern.”

Though the actual article where the four men are pictured in their pledge paraphilia and headline of the rape rumor has been ripped from the university’s archival record, the anger and rage that colored the campus seems deeply etched in the memories of these participants.

Athletics and Changing Racial Attitudes

The establishment of the Mid-Continent Athletic Association during the 1978-79 school year, would cause a slight shift in racial dynamics at Eastern and in Charleston. With the hiring of the Director of Athletics, Mike Mullally in 1974, Eastern began to shift the direction of the school towards more racial openness. And finally with the establishment of the Mid-Continent Athletic Association, implemented in 1978, which allowed for the collective grouping of Eastern, Western, Akron, Northern Iowa, Northern Michigan and Youngstown State, Eastern had even greater exposure than

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258 Ibid. Editorial section. “An Apology”
before. Dr. Franklin, during that time served as the NCAA representative for Eastern and saw first hand what such a move did for Eastern at the time:

President Fite, brought in another guy, Mike Mullally Oklahoma Mafia! This meant big time athletics at a small school. Eastern had not had a winning team in 25 years. To have Eastern winning meant that finances would be brought to the school more. More money, more recruiting... [Eastern had start]... winning at track, football, baseball, and basketball. Now you had the entire community galvanizing behind the time. This winning meant national recognition!

After the spring of 1977 rape rumor incident, a large part of the community was able to move past it rather quickly due to the fact that the incident occurred within a week of the close of the semester. As the summer came the fall would come and there was minimal talk about the situation. Shorty after this shifting of Eastern’s independent sports to joining the league of Division I schools, Eastern, under Mike Mullally’s directorship, begin to learn what it meant to win and have a national spotlight. The Charleston community began to respond as many of the players that were being recruited were Blacks from major cities. The perception of Blacks went from being an imminent threat to almost being a celebrated ‘savior,’ at least in terms of the athletic program. Franklin recalled how the local community began to shift in progressive ways:

When we [he and his wife Golda] came in Charleston, there was not on business that would hire black students. I think that was primarily due to the winning athletics. It has an impact on race relations.

A perusal of the yearbooks revealed the token representation of two or three Black players in earlier years to a sizeable increase of twenty-three Black players and two fulltime Black coaches for Eastern’s football team. A large part of what could have been instrumental in allowing the community of Charleston to become more accepting of Black [athletes] could be contributed to community volunteering fundraising “teams” that were instituted by Director of Athletics Mike Mullally in the late 1970s. This

259 1978 Warbler p. 70 Brian Nielson
community fundraising efforts would expose the Black team members as well as the
other team members to the community to raise funds for various sports initiatives. This
“collaborative” effort on the part of Charleston citizens and all members of the various
athletic teams at Eastern seemed to create a new level of camaraderie among racial
groups. Racism was not eradicated in any way, but with Eastern’s Black athletes and
teams gaining in national prominence, winning became a campus and community
priority.

By the time Mona made it to campus in the 1980 she noted the climate was a bit
more settled. Recruited to Eastern by Silas Purnell and with the influence her sister
Dana, Mona was excited to be a college student. She remembered her initial talk with
him:

Si Purnell, he got me down here at Eastern with money. Right before, before he passed he had started
sending students down to Eastern and because he knew that a lot of the students that he was sending
to historically black institutions weren’t surviving. They weren’t staying there. So he started coming
our way. But everybody knew Si. Everybody did.

Once Mona arrived, the more settled climate coupled with her personality would be
critical in her success at Eastern. At Eastern because many white students came from
areas of the state where towns are smaller and there are no Blacks, adjusting to the idea
of a Black roommate proved difficult. While many students attested to issues they knew
of that ended poorly, Mona’s experience was a successful one. She describes her
experience:

When I moved to, and my roommate Debbie didn’t come back after my sophomore year. So she
left and I got my first white roommate, Kay Duvo. I remember her. And it was truly astonishing
one, because that was my first interaction on a regular basis. But she was so cool you know that
she made the transition for me even better because you know we sat down. Our first week, she
was like ask me anything, you know, and I was like, “well why do you have to wash your hair
everyday?” You know, so we really got to get into a lot of stuff you know.

So, I think she made that transition a lot easier for me because you know; she grew up in a town where
she had never seen a black person until she stepped on Eastern’s campus. You know, so I was always
blessed to have experiences I think that it just made it so much easier for me to cope. So I didn’t have
to deal with any of the racial problems. I’m not saying that they weren’t there, and that it didn’t
happened I was just in a and I keep saying a cyclone, it was literally all about Delta, you know all about working with BSU. I didn’t interact. I didn’t have to come out. It made it comfortable for me.

The open and upfront communication skills honed, as a student at Eastern would prove beneficial in the years to come as Mona would later serve in several counseling positions and ultimately as the Director of Eastern’s Minority Student Affairs.

Influential Leaders in the Afro-American Studies Program

On the academic front, the Afro-American Studies Program was in many ways a program that existed at the university but was grossly underfunded. Many Black studies programs throughout the nation were celebrating their ten-year anniversaries, but like many campuses, Eastern’s program was in survival mode.

After intensive meetings with key faculty like Arlen Fowler, Dr. Bill T. Ridgeway and then President Doudna and various committeemen, Eastern’s Afro-American Studies Program arrived in 1970. By 1979, the program remained unchanged until later the curriculum was slightly altered to meet the changing demands of its’ student population.

Illinois though in need of funding throughout the state, ranked 3rd behind California and New York in the size of their Black Studies programs.\(^{261}\) The various professors involved throughout the state of Illinois held key leadership positions. Yet at Eastern when each director sought out help, it was left unanswered.

From 1973-1977 Willa Mae Hemmons served as Director of the Afro-American Studies Program. She was an attorney who came from Cleveland and had served at HBCU Central State. At the end of her tenure her innovative ideas of research proved to be a great contribution to the field of Afro-American Studies. Her study captured the

perceptions of Black student experiences at Eastern and juxtaposed them to Central State University, an HBCU. Hemmons’ study discussed various elements of Black life at both institutions but some key findings surrounded their campus experiences. When asked if “The area town surround my campus are on a whole sympathetic to black students 5.7% of Eastern students agreed vs. 10.3% of Central State students. Regarding support from teachers, Hemmons asked, “can you go to most of your teachers to ask for help in areas others than just school subjects, 21.8% of Eastern students agreed and 44.8% of Central State students agreed with this suggestion. When asked, “I feel that most of my campus teachers are genuinely interested in my success as a black student, 17.2% of Eastern students agreed in comparison with 63.2% of Central State students. Lastly, when asked is my campus library well stocked with literature dealing with my the black experience only 17.2% of Eastern’s student agreed versus 41.4% of Central students. When asked about the success after graduation, the picture of students at Eastern was more dismal.262 In all, Hemmons study suggests that the perception and (oft times reality) of students at PWIs are more bleak which ultimately impacts their collegiate and life success.

In 1978, Johnetta Jones came to Eastern as a Ph.D. candidate from Kent State University in Ohio and took on the position of Director of the African American Studies Program. Though still small, Johnetta spend a large amount of time recruiting more students to the program in order to increase the size and visibility at Eastern. Mona remembered when she was first entered Ms. Jones’ class, “The African American Experiences:”

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...I started with the African American Experience course Johnetta Jones, and I just loved that class! After taking it getting an A in the course, Ms. Jones was like, “Mona this is just something you that you might think.”

Outside of this Johnetta Jones was very instrumental in my life. I mean, literally opening my doors to just even a career in higher education. She started off as the chair or Director of African American Studies for that particular department and got me into the major and also got me into the peer helper program. Some of the activities we do now as far as engaging students and staff, she did then.

After the successful experience during Jones’ class, Mona added another major, so she would graduate in five years with a major in Sociology and Afro-American Studies. During Jones’ tenure, it would be the first time the number of majors in Afro-American Studies would go to double digits. Her recruiting efforts along with constant communication with university administration helped to sustain a program that was experiencing budgetary issues and other structural concerns with faculty and the curriculum. Today the program is still going strong and offers majors and minors and has remained a catalyst in the state of Illinois.

Summary

By the early 1980s the campus climate seemed to be much more settled, while there was room for improvement. Students from various areas of the state were frequenting Eastern for the first time. Those Black students from areas like Centralia, Maywood, Bellwood, Waukegan, and even Springfield were new additions to the campus. While Eastern saw students from other geographic locations the numbers remained static. Just months before, President Marvin during his “State of the University Address” explained the need to further improve enrollment numbers for

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263 In 1977-78, there were 5 majors, In1978-79 there were 2 majors, In 1979-80, there was 12 and the succeeding year there was 11. Boxes A-0088-A-0057, A-0060 Stanley Rivers VP of Academic Affairs 2/15/82 The Bachelor of Science Degree Program in Afro-American Studies at Eastern Illinois University.
Black students and recruitment of Black faculty. The famed civil rights leader, Julian Bond, visited campus enlightening students on what the impact of the Bakke decision was and what it meant for the stagnating Black civil rights.

While this study aimed to learn of the lives of Black students at Eastern during 1967-1982 it was interesting to learn of some of the pressures Black faculty had to endure in their daily lives in the community and classroom. Coupled with his inability to receive the financial support of his research and status in various organizations Franklin left Eastern for Vanderbilt. While here, he and Ridgeway along with Jones and other Black faculty were also isolated. Understanding this helped explain why Franklin and Ridgeway were relentless about the recruitment of Black faculty and staff. Dr. Franklin, well after his position as Affirmative Action Director ended, wrote President Marvin as he was concerned about the deterioration of Black faculty and staff at Eastern, “…That blacks have left the institution may be understandable; that departments and other units have failed to aggressively recruit and hire replacements for them is totally inexcusable.” Franklin goes on to cite each faculty that was lost and admonished President Marvin that if, “this pattern of losing faculty and staff continues we will return to our pre-1970 status!” While the number of female faculty and staff hires had increased the number for Blacks remained stagnant. Franklin concluded that the implication of such measures is that “affirmative action for blacks and white women can not be viewed through the same prism.” In this same letter, Franklin shared an instance that he also shared with me during our interview at his Las Vegas home.

Upon being appointed the position of Director of Affirmative Action one of his female colleagues began to protest her need to gain the position. She stated, “You don’t

264 1980 Warbler p. 20 Ed Mazzocco
265 1981 correspondence from Franklin to Marvin.
have to tell me about discrimination, I have been a woman all of my life.” Franklin replied, “you have been a white woman but you have not been a ‘nigger’ in America.” Franklin went on to speak of the new responsibility of the presidency and the affirmative action officer and how prior to the 1960s the future of the university was decided upon by deans and chairman, but now the president and the affirmative action officer were charged with creating an atmosphere conducive to the “recruitment and employment of black faculty and staff, especially in the case of replacements.”

A few days later President Marvin wrote a brief response to Dr. Franklin’s letter. He said that Franklin’s letter had a significant impact on him. He stated, “I regretted the deteriorating situation and commit[ted] myself with a renewed dedication to get the matter changed during the next academic year.”

Contribution of Success

Though Franklin would leave Eastern in 1986 to serve as Professor of History at Vanderbilt, he stated:

A big problem with my leaving is that, I still miss the students at Eastern. We had one great relationship with the students there and so many of those students went on to do well in all fields so forth and so on.

The laborious collaborative efforts of students and key faculty of the previous decade seemingly allowed the newer students to have an overall “better” experience. In regards to the racial dynamics many of this generation attested to the fact that Eastern was in many ways “perfect” for them to call home, while others had difficulties in classes with instructors. Overall, the students contributed their success not to the

266 1981 correspondence from Franklin to Marvin.
institution but to various individuals in their lives that served to undergird their success. They stated in this regard as follows:

[Almetris] She (in reference to her sister-in-law Linda) saw something in me that I didn’t see, that I didn’t know that I could do college. Everything that she did I wanted to do because she was successful. And I think the reason why a lot of kids are not successful because they don’t see it.

[Mona] I want to put a lot on my personality. I think just being able to integrate well with all.

[Kelvin] My mom, I wanted to make her proud!

[Clifton] My social involvement with BSU was the key to my success. It made me more aware of my Blackness.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Joy Williamson’s work *Black Power on Campus* makes a tremendous contribution to the study of the Black Power movement on PWIs. Her project, situated just one hour north at larger research-intensive university in Illinois, ignited my desire to study the experiences of Blacks at Eastern. With it, I aimed to seek an additional account of Black students and their plight to survive and thrive on a campus that was ill prepared for their presence. I hoped to reveal an in-depth perspective into their experiences at a time when Black students struggled to find voice. This project sought to give voice and validation to a community of students who have been traditionally overlooked and seemingly undervalued. Willa Mae Hemmons’ 1981 study comparing the experiences of Blacks at Eastern with those at Central State University in Ohio, found that many of the students at Eastern and schools like Eastern struggled to find support and validation and most have a bleak perception of their lives’ trajectory.

When troubling methodology, Richard White in *Remembering the Ahanagaran* displays of his quest to qualify the memories of his mother’s life as history through the search for evidence of her past. He suggests that memory is only validated when there are enough evidence to support it. While I valued his perspective, in light of my project I question what happens when there is not enough evidence to support the memories of a particular subject? Are then, the memories disqualified to reach the status of ‘history’? If so, what happens when the evidence are destroyed and memories are the sole survivor? I think about the rape rumor here, had it not been for Dr. Lane, my

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knowledge of the incident would have been null considering the article is actually deleted from the archival record.

Notes on Sources and Methods

The ten students and two professors (plus one from Southern) interviewed provided a wealth of information. Most of the information was corroborated with archival sources and proved factual. The information that was removed from the files was fact checked by multiple participants. Each participant spoke candidly about humiliating events that occurred in the classroom once they arrived to campus, they also spoke of the perseverance that became evident through their acts of leadership and resistance. The implementation of oral history here, afforded insights into not only the texture of everyday life but also moments of change and transformation as the participants, through speaking and recording, helped make sense of their own lives. Many of the participants revealed that the stories they unveiled are done so for the first time.

Overall, this first set of experiences of students who transitioned from urban settings to a rural town and campus did so seamlessly. Though there were many who had to adjust to the culture of food, music, and other aspects of social life, they were fortunate to have a remnant of faculty and staff in place that were largely supportive of their needs and desires. The wisdom of older students that assisted them in becoming catalysts of their own proved to be a beneficial addition to their time at Eastern. Also the internal drive to resist the status quo was a larger theme that persisted.

The second wave of students from 1976-1982 experienced some transitional impacts adjusting from city life to a rural land. However, aside from a few incidents the social and racial climate for students seem to be reflected of what was happening in the
rest of the nation. The civil rights areas had mellowed down and it made way for a calmer experience. Still, issues like funding for Afro-American Studies Programs and recruiting and retention of Black faculty, staff and students persisted.

Educationally, of the ten students who were interviewed for this project eight went on to receive a Masters degree or higher. Three received a Ph.D. Of the ten, five were Chicago natives, and four hailed from East St. Louis, Illinois and one from Cairo, Illinois. Seven currently hold directorship positions or are business owners, two are retired and one is currently teaching. Of all of the participants they each stayed at Eastern a minimum three years giving then ample time to learn the culture of Charleston and the campus community. Each of the participants has maintained close ties to the University through financial gifts, attendance at major events and correspondeces. Three of whom are working or worked for the university for at least two decades. Three of the ten students later became faculty members at Eastern; one has retired after more than thirty years of service. Their bilateral perspective as students, then employees, provided great insights into their overall experience at Eastern and in Charleston.

Ultimately, nine of the ten students would recommend Eastern to future students. Although not monolithic, it would be safe to suggest that the experiences of Blacks at Eastern Illinois University during 1967-1982 was difficult, yet yielded results of overall satisfaction by the individual participants. The unity that existed among the Black students in their enclaves of organizations served as a safety net that propelled their acceleration through an institution that seemed ill prepared for their presence but in some ways were willing to accommodate the needs of this small yet growing population.
Through my research I also found that Eastern’s faculty and students have maintained close ties with other regional institutions in the area, specifically the University of Illinois. From Eastern’s beginnings, first president Livingston Lord graduated from the U of I with a degree in Law. Lord served Eastern from 1899-1933. In regard to Black students, prior to 1967 there were two documented Black students who were residents of Champaign or Urbana. Val Jean Bush and Joan A. Ganns were such students. They proved to be catalysts for other students like Elmer Pullen to come to Eastern. Also, the value of Eastern as a quality institution in its production of student leaders like Ernest Morris (who later became the Vice President of Student Affairs at the University of Washington), and faculty like Anne Smith who later went on to serve as member of the Board of Trustees at the University of Illinois. Charles Colbert also served as Vice Chancellor for Administration and Human Resources at the University of Illinois and was Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Eastern from 1988 to 1991 and Vice President for Business Affairs there from 1991-1994. Also, Eastern alum Dean Michael Jefferies recently retired as Associate Dean of Students at the University of Illinois.

In all, Mona Davenport over the last decade has intentionally worked to improve the numbers of minority students at Eastern by her untraditional approach in training alumni members in the process of recruitment, weekend trips loaded with activities for incoming students as well have making herself accessible to students by constructing an office situated in one of the dormitories. These and other university efforts like lower state tuition cost, has allowed the rate of minority students’ enrollment to increase by more than 100 percent, from 9.2 percent in 2004 to 23.6 percent in the spring of 2014.\footnote{The enrollment numbers mentioned here were supplied by the Office of Minority Student Affairs at Eastern Illinois University as outlined in table below. Of the 23.6 percent included are Native}
Table 8. Current Minority Student Representation at Eastern Illinois University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>924 (7.48%)</td>
<td>1382 (11.88%)</td>
<td>1580 (15.1%)</td>
<td>1414 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>39 (.32%)</td>
<td>61 (.30%)</td>
<td>27 (.26%)</td>
<td>18 (.20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>154 (1.25%)</td>
<td>137 (1.18%)</td>
<td>103 (.99%)</td>
<td>85 (.96%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>284 (2.3%)</td>
<td>342 (2.94%)</td>
<td>399 (3.83%)</td>
<td>402 (4.55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11.35%</td>
<td>16.52%</td>
<td>21.72%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, it remains critically important for universities like Eastern to establish a culture that is synonymous to equity that would outlive Mona. It remains critical to have policies in place that are evident of the commitment to maintaining a vibrant Black student population. At Eastern, establishing programs that are committed to improving the lives of students are critical to honoring the history and experiences that are witnesses in this project.

It seems critical to establish a cadre of faculty and staff as well strategically placing key staff in critical areas like the presidents’ office and in vice president positions, as well as admissions, academic advising and places like the counseling center to continually advocate for the cause and concern of Black students. Though the movement of the 1960s has ended, the struggle for Black students to navigate their ways American students, Asian/Pacific Islanders and Blacks and the Latino/a population. As mentioned previously in chapter 2, Blacks make up 16 percent of the population in spring of 2014. The 2014 numbers were taken at the start of the spring semester.

This chart and terminology was taken directly from data received from the Office of Minority Student Affairs Office.
successfully through PWIs with the prevalence of a curriculum that meets their needs and social outlets that are safe and endorsed by the university at large remains a vital area of concern. While institutions steadily work to improve the diversity of their student population, there has still has to be a concerted effort on the part of the universities to create a culture of value among the student population and work for an equal representation of all racial groups specifically those who have endured a history of discrimination. Ignoring the history can destroying the destiny of a community of people. Diversity of ideas, experiences, and backgrounds create a rich learning environment in which we can all benefit. If we endeavor to improve the experiences of every student and even faculty through campus wide\textsuperscript{271} efforts of effective and consistent diversity, this could be a great first step. Through this research, it is evident that Offices of Affirmative Action and Minority Student Affairs are necessary in assisting the campus learn about deficits in diversity and the like, but it is vitally significant to have the university’s administration (i.e. The Office President) at the fore, maintaining a consistent and permanent concern in matters of race and cultural concerns. Studying the tenure of President Quincy Doudna could potentially serve as a model in achieving such balance.
Summary

As these first generation college students embarked on a path of education, they endured much more. These students epitomize the essence of Nikki Giovanni’s words as mentioned in Chapter 4, “If history is to have any meaning ... it shows us that normal everyday human beings once went beyond what they thought they could be to achieve something and improve life for us all.” These students were hoping to have a better experience at life away from home their efforts have impacted students of many generations to come.

During my Speech Communications class in 2000, my Eastern professor said something that I never forgot. He stated, “Much of what you learn in college will happen outside the classroom.” These pioneers at Eastern can definitely attest to this fact. Their journeys were not a monolithic experience; some as athletes and musicians who experienced a raced perspective, but in many ways remained shielded. Others walk forthright into the heat of battles. While Eastern and Charleston was a racially hostile environment, there were some good white folks around. As with Marvinetta’s experience, there were some whites that attempted to gain an understanding of a more diverse world. As evident in the leadership of President Quincy Doudna, he was a leader who during a tumultuous time in many ways resisted the status quo and through institutional policies desired to improve the experiences of Blacks students and staff at Eastern when it was unpopular to do so.

In all, the process of unraveling the story of Black students at Eastern Illinois University from 1967-1982 was a humbling experience. This process shifted my mindset from being a product of the school “situated in the shadows” of other major institutions, to establishing a grander respect for the intellectual, passionate, community
agents of change that existed in the students as well as some of the leadership at Eastern Illinois University at a time of when there was cause for much sacrifice.

For me, this research revealed a historical journey of students at a Midwestern school in a community that was new to their presence. The level of covert institutionalized racism that currently exists in college corridors and classrooms makes is difficult to assess. However, the daily experiences of micro aggression witnessed by Blacks at white institutions remains prevalent. Though there are many limitations to this study, I hope this research lends itself to provoke and provide more safe spaces to continue the conversations about race and education in an effort to continually understand the experiences of Blacks students in America’s universities.


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APPENDIX A

Eastern Illinois University
Alumni Interview Questionnaire

1. What is your full name? Gender?
2. What is your date and year of birth?
3. What years did you attend EIU?
4. What is your present occupation?
5. What was your academic major?
6. Did you have a change in major while you attended the University?
7. If so, what was your major initially? What did you change it to? Why did you change?
8. What groups or organizations were you involved in during your time at EIU?
9. Can you recall your initial thoughts when you arrived to Charleston, IL?
10. Describe your transition process to EIU?
11. Describe your transition process to Charleston, IL?
12. Describe the racial climate of EIU during your tenure? With other racial groups?
13. Did you or any of your counterparts leave the EIU prematurely?
14. What professors or staff at EIU do you still remember? Why did they make an impression?
15. Describe your interactions with your professors.
16. Who/What introduced you to the idea of attending EIU?
17. Were you apart of the Gateway Program?
   a. Did it provide a sense of support socially, academically or otherwise?
18. Do you believe your previous academic preparation adequately prepare you to compete at EIU?
19. What contributed to your success at EIU? What contributed to your lack of success at EIU?

20. Would you recommend EIU to other minor students? If so, why? If not, why?
Dear Research Participant,

The historical experience of African Americans at Eastern Illinois University is indeed a journey worth being widely shared! This history will enhance, enlighten and educate the academic community, the community at large, as well as future students attending Eastern Illinois University. I hope that you will add to this great historical moment!

I, LaTasha Nesbitt, graduate student in Educational Policy Organization & Leadership at the University of Illinois am the primary researcher. My email is lcain@illinois.edu. Dr. Yoon Pak will be the supervisor of this project, her information is mentioned below.

The purpose of this project is to gain your perspective and insight as it relates to your educational experience while attending or working at Eastern Illinois University. Capturing the voice of African Americans, in relations to attending EIU is the aim of this project.

Information will be provided in the form of questions. Questioning will be gathered in two forms: there will be an in-person audio recorded interview as well as a survey to be at the conclusion of the interview. The interviews are set to last 1 hour. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. During the interview and while completing the survey, any questions you do not wish to answer can be skipped. I want to ensure you that we will focus on discussion on and around the given questions only. However, I will not interrupt or stop you from including information that is not particularly addressed in the questionnaire but might be related to the given question.

Your identity will be protected throughout unless you desire it to be identifiable (as indicated by checking boxes below). Your name will not be included in the information that becomes public, unless you desire otherwise. If desired, photos may be taken to add to the historical record on the research topic. Please understand that you have no obligation to me. Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. The emotionality involved in recalling hurtful racial factors could be a potential risk during this study. I will provide a list of counselors and agencies for possible use.

If at anytime during this study, you become uncomfortable or uneasy you may end the particular session or decide to no longer participate. And at this time the data previously provided will be destroyed.

If you have questions about this research project at anytime, or if you experience any problems related to your participation in the project, please feel free to contact the responsible project investigator: Dr. Yoon Pak, Educational Policy Organization & Leadership, 1310 S. Sixth St., Urbana, IL 61820, XXX-XXX-XXXX or yoonpak@illinois.edu or myself, LaTasha L Nesbitt at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office at (217) 333-2670 (collect calls will be accepted if you identify yourself as a research participant) or via email at irb@illinois.edu.

You will be issued a copy of this letter immediately after you have signed it. Thank you for your desire to participate in this study. Your contribution is significant. I am excited about your interest in becoming apart of history!

Please take your time and read the information provided here carefully. After doing so, please complete the following:

**I have read and now understand the above information.** The information I provide as well as my participation is confidential, unless I want to make it public. Hence, I understand the need to be cautious about those I tell of my involvement in this research. I give permission for the researcher to publish and present the information I provide in future documents. However, if I am uncomfortable and/or uneasy at any point during this project, I will be released from this commitment. The data I provide will be destroyed. Because I understand and agree with all things contained in this letter, I hereby give my consent to have information I give be included in this and future research projects.

I give permission for my interview and survey responses to be connected with my names ___ Yes ___ No

I give permission for my photo to be taken/ disseminated for historical and research purposes ___ Yes ___ No

__________________________________________   ____________________________
Participant                                      Date

__________________________________________   ____________________________
Investigator                                    Date
APPENDIX C
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