

Feb. 11

A SALUTE TO BLACK HISTORY WEEK

Feb. 15

Minority Students Progress At University of Washington

In 1968 the University of Washington, across the ship canal from Seattle's Central Area and within a short distance of three high schools attended heavily by Blacks, had among its 31,913 students a negligible handful of minority students. In a three city Puget Sound metropolitan area heavily populated by Blacks, the University of Washington, which is the largest publicly-supported institution of higher education in the West, enrolled fewer than 100 Black students; in a state with a great Indian heritage there were fewer than a dozen American Indians; in a state with a large population of migrant workers and other farm laborers of Chicano background, there were fewer than 25 Chicanos.

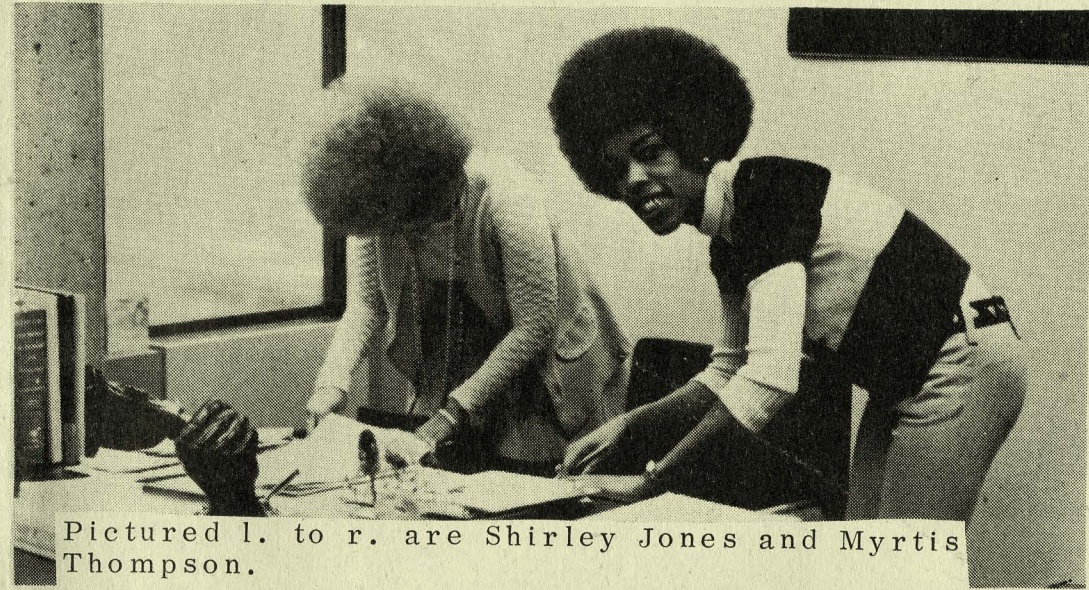
The University's Educational Opportunity Program has come a great distance in that time, and it aims to go further. It would like for the fathers and mothers of minority students in elementary and high schools to see the kind of opportunity for their children that they themselves did not have as young men and women.

In the years just ahead, according to Dr. Samuel E. Kelly, the University's Vice President for Minority Affairs, the Educational Opportunity Program will not only grow but it will aim for much greater involvement of minority students in law, medicine, the other health professions, and science-related careers.

The year 1968 saw University of Washington officials confronted by Black students and people from the community who demanded a firm commitment of resources to the development of a comprehensive program of recruitment, admission, and supportive services for minority and disadvantaged students. These efforts and demands layed the foundation for what is now the Educational Opportunity Program, administered by the Office of Minority Affairs.

From a modest populace of 257 minority students in 1968 among a total University population in excess of 31,000, the Office of Minority Affairs through it's EOP has expanded to include 2175 undergraduate and 550 graduate and professional students. As of Autumn, 1974 the total University of Washington enrollment is 34,545 of which 11.1 per cent are minority students.

The efforts of a small number of students, capitalizing on the climate of the late sixties, with administrative guidance and support has developed into an almost unparalleled minority educational program. It derives it's strength and directs it's major thrust



Pictured l. to r. are Shirley Jones and Myrtis Thompson.

toward a multi-ethnic program through it's four ethnic divisions (Chicano, Black, Asian and Native American). One of the pillars of the Office of Minority Affairs is it's philosophical foundation as stated by Dr. Samuel E. Kelly, Vice President for Minority Affairs, "The Office of Minority Affairs supports a pluralistic social and economic environment which strives to enhance and support the beauty and richness of divergent cultures. In this manner all groups can contribute to the preservation and hence, the appreciation of their distinct historical and cultural contributions."

In recognition of Black History Week certain historical parallels are visible in the emergence and struggle for survival of Black people and in the continual striving of the Office of Minority Affairs toward equal access to higher education for all. Both are examples of conflict, change and a perpetual striving for recognition and survival. We must recognize that change and progress has been forth-coming for Black people, but we must not become complacent nor insensitive to the continuing need to effect change.

Equally important, we must remember that, historically, significant change has not been forthcoming without the struggle and dedication to our basic principles. The striving of Black students is exemplified in their academic, social and political achievements. Black students, ever cognizant of their historical repression, have achieved personal growth, self-pride and have demonstrated a persistence in the face of adversity.

The Office of Minority Affairs assumes an advocacy role in it's concerted effort to impact the educational process through recognition that education has been one of the major institutions for the transmittal and perpetuation of racism. Contrary to myth, education has neither been "public" in the sense of being responsive to Blacks nor able to educate, in the sense of meeting the needs of all students and reflecting their diverse cultures, values, and histories.

The Office of Minority Affairs is indeed a part of Black History and has pledged it's support to the educational welfare of Black as well as all minority students. It has also pledged itself to produce the quality professionals that are so badly needed in the Black community. The Office of Minority Affairs encourages Black students to seek education as a vehicle to initiate and facilitate positive change in the lives of Black people and our communities.

Support The E.O.P. Scholarship Program

For Information Contact

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