

# The Daily Southerner

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## High schools collect and combine histories

By **KIMBERLY BELLAMY**  
STAFF WRITER

All of the eight former black high schools in Nash and Edgecombe counties are combining forces to ensure that while some of their history is lost, it's not forgotten.

After the state mandated desegregation, the schools closed their doors between 1970 and 1973. Soon after, the birth of separate alumni associations were formed.

Now a combined organization called the North Carolina Association of Black High School Alumni (NCABA) has been formed for all: Phillips High School in Battleboro, Bricks School in Whitakers, Booker T. Washington High School in Rocky Mount, W.A. Pattillo High School in Tarboro, Conetoe High School in Conetoe, G.W. Carver High School in Pinetops, Nash Central High School in Nashville, Swift Creek High School in Whitakers and C.C. Spaulding High School in Spring Hope.

Each of the schools have simi-

larities and the organization's purpose mirrors those commonalities.

"We have the schools to gather to identify their histories and preserve that history," said Morris Roberson, president of NCABA and Nash Central alumni.

Vice President of NCABA and W.A. Pattillo alumni Varnell Kinnin said that once their histories are gathered, they will combine them in a book for historical use, and distributed at libraries.

"I think it'll be something that people will want to know and explore," said Brenda Asbury, financial secretary of NCABA and Phillips alumni.

The struggle that the group faces is some of their background is fading away as their classmates die, and some of their information was lost in the flood in 1999.

"One of the most interesting things is all of the schools lost all their membraalia," Asbury said.

The members are now trying to reach out to classmates or discover

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Black high school presidents and representatives, back from left, Lewis Higgs, Edward Hodge, Leah Vines, John T. Avent and Catherine Blackwell. Front from left, Morris Roberson, William Knight, Linda Worsley and Shirley Clark. Photo/Kimberly Bellamy

towards the future.

The attendees brought gifts to donate to Toys for Tots. Each alumni chapter raises money for scholarships and civic activities as well.

The 14 officers and charter members of NCABA were recognized with certificates for their work on the social and the organization as a whole.

There are plans to expand the organization state-wide and make the

social an annual event around the Thanksgiving holiday.

"It was way above expectations. Everyone said they enjoyed and looked forward to next year," Kinnin said.

"As word gets out, yes we're going to grow and ask other schools to be involved."

Anyone that has information on one of the black high schools in the areas, contact Kinnin at varnellK@hotmail.com