

# Activism in Action

Evolution of the Minority Student Caucus at the  
UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health

M. Anita Page Holmes, JD, MPH

Victor J. Schoenbach, PhD

Delton Atkinson, MPH, MPH

John Hatch, DrPH, MSW

Walter Isaacs, MPH

42nd Annual Minority Health Conference, February 26, 2021

# Minority Student Caucus Founders

The story is recounted by the  
highlighted founders.

Roamless Hudson, Jr. (Chair)  
**Margaret Anita Page Holmes**  
T.B. Haynes  
Elizabeth W. Cooper  
Quanita Carruthers  
Sadie Davis Graham  
**Lois S. Isler**  
**John Hatch**  
Peggy Davis  
**Walter Isaacs** (Secretary)  
Marjorie Crawford  
Garfield Crawford  
Cyril Allen

# Pre-Caucus Years

1940-1970

1940 - Division of PH separates from UNC School of Medicine. Rosenau becomes dean School of Public Health.

1940's - Dr. James Shepard, Founder & President of NCCU collaborates with Dr. Milton Rosenau on public health education program at NC Central University (then NC College for Negroes)

1945 - Lucy Morgan (Health Education) organizes joint NCCU-UNC “**Journal Club**”

1945 - M.S. in Health Education at NCCU (graduates included Howard Fitts)

1961 - First Black SPH students

# 1960s Black Graduates from UNC Public Health

Van Sizar Allen, MPH 1962, PhD 1969 ( HEED)



Julian Leigh Lewis, Sr., MPH 1962 (HEED)

Orville Radcliffe Blake, MPH 1963 (HEED)

John Edward Campbell, MSPH 1963 (HEED)



William Alexander Darity, Sr., PhD 1964 (HEED)

Edward Vernal Ellis, PhD 1964 (HEED)



Frances Perkins Vines, MPH 1964 (NUTR)

Clarence Mathews Lee, MSPH 1965 (PALP)



Bernice Green Otudeko, MSPH 1966 (HEED)

Georgianna Dean Bolden, MSPH 1967 (BIOS)

Flossie Waller Saddler, MPH 1967 (HEED)

Otto White, Jr., MSPH 1967 (ENVR)

Roosevelt Bowden, Jr., MPH 1968 (HEED)

Keith Elser Callwood, MPH 1968 (BIOS)

Ida Jenkins Gadsden, PhD 1968 (HEED)

Wilma Griffin Johnson, MSPH 1968 (BIOS)

Ira Laster, Jr., PhD 1969 (HEED)

George Lawson Liggins, MPH 1969 (PALP)

Vashti Johnson Richardson, MPH 1969 (PHN)

William T. Small, Jr., MSPH 1969 (ENVR)

Elizabeth Anne Tisdale, MSPH 1969 (HADM)



# Formation of the Caucus

(referred to variously as the “Black Student Caucus”, “Minority Students Group”, and eventually, the “Minority Student Caucus”)

**1971:**

- Picnic at John Hatch’s house
  - John’s pronouncement
- Monthly meetings begin
- Purpose and objectives
- Statement of Concerns

# Convening of Monthly Meetings and “Assignments”

- Unifying of Black students and development of support system
- Concerns identified:
  - Low percentage of minority students and faculty
  - Housing, financial, social challenges
  - More relevant curriculum
- Defining roles/responsibilities, e.g., president, secretary, social, resource committee

A Statement of Concerns Regarding the Relevance & Responsiveness  
of the School of Public Health to the Needs of Black Americans

The Black American students in the School of Public Health have become increasingly concerned about the situation in this school as related to Black Americans. We feel an obligation to express these concerns to the administration.

The situation of Blacks in the South is not unlike that of residents of developing countries. We have become increasingly cognizant of the magnitude and severity of the health problems and needs of our fellow Blacks and view this decade as a critical period for ourselves, the nation, and institutions that wish to be a part of the solution.

# Statement of Concerns: Rationale

*(Presented to Dean Fred Mayes, June 1971)*

- Magnitude and severity of health problems
- Input of black professionals needed at policy and planning levels
- Obligation of School to prepare training for Blacks to fill these roles



# Statement of Concerns: Proposed Actions

1. Goal of 25% proportion of Black American students by September 1975
2. Immediate employment of Black American to recruit Black American students
3. Goal of 10% proportion of Black faculty by September 1975
4. Black professionals be utilized as resource persons and consultants
5. Appropriate Black representation in all planning and negotiation of special projects, research, or services specifically focused toward Blacks
6. Special considerations and assistance provided for foreign students be extended to Black American students
7. Curriculum include courses geared to the unique needs of students planning to devote themselves to service in predominantly black settings

# Black Student Caucus Meets with Dean William Fred Mayes and Selected SPH Faculty

## June 23, 1971 meeting with Dean Mayes & Selected SPH Faculty

Dean Mayes began the meeting by stating that there were no differences of opinion regarding the Faculty's generally positive attitude towards the needs of Black students at the School. The ideas expressed in their recent statement of their concerns were well accepted and endorsed, and there was a commitment to action on the part of the Faculty. We now needed mechanisms for translating these ideas into reality. Although this group could not make policy, it could recommend it, and action could follow.

# Main Points - June 23, 1971 Meeting with Dean

- Ideas in concerns well accepted, endorsed, Faculty commitment to action.
- Appointment of Black American to recruit Black student highest priority
  - Dean's Cabinet Goal-15% by 1972
  - Caucus-25% by 1975
  - White and Black faculty & student involvement needed
- Skill in outreach and funds for student support
- Increase attractiveness of Chapel Hill to students and faculty
  - Potential social impact
  - Social acceptability and housing
- Curriculum should emphasize strengths and potentialities of minority groups
- **ACTION NOW**

TO: Minority Students Group, Mr. Roamless Hudson,  
Chairman  
SPH Planning Council  
Dean's Cabinet  
SPH Administrative Board  
Vice Chancellor Sheps

FROM: Dean, SPH *W. J. Mayer*

DATE: June 30, 1971

SUBJECT: Progress in SPH Minorities Activities  
(Copy of recent communications: (1) Minutes of  
June 23, 1971, meeting with Minority Students;  
(2) "Job Description" for the new position,  
"Coordinator for Minority Affairs"; and (3) Memo-  
randum inviting Chairman of Minorities Student Group  
to attend Dean's Cabinet Meetings.)

You will find copies of the attached recent communications self-explanatory. They are being sent to the above mentioned bodies and persons in an endeavor to improve communications within the School, and to demonstrate that action is being taken in this

# UNC School of Public Health

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Coordinator of Minority Affairs, UNC School of Public Health

The incumbent will be directly responsible to the Dean of the School, although he may also have academic or administrative ties with one or more departments. He or she will be responsible for coordinating and promoting the interests of students and faculty from minority groups. These efforts will necessitate close and effective cooperation with the University's administrative personnel, department heads, faculty, staff and student groups.

# Job Description - Coordinator of Minority Affairs

- Directly responsible to the Dean
- Academic or administrative ties with one or more departments
- Responsible for coordinating and promoting interests of students and faculty from minority groups
- Close and effective cooperation with the University's administrative personnel, department heads, faculty, staff and student groups

# Caucus Activities to Support New Students

- Orientation session - campus, styles of instructors, the black student caucus, School of Public Health and our responsibility to influence curriculum.
- Cookout in early fall to welcome new students and their families.
- Monthly meetings in which gripes, future plans for action, sharing experiences and learnings can take place on a regular basis.
- Making available textbooks, papers, etc., to interested students.
- Individual sessions for remedial or personal needs of each other.
- Resource identification and assistance.



# Recruitment of William T. Small, Jr.

- Recruitment and hiring of William T. Small, Jr. as Minority Recruiter (retired in 1999 as Associate Dean and Senior Advisor for Multicultural Affairs)
- Student led recruitment for Minority Recruiter
- Roamless Hudson reaches out to Bill Small
- Interviews held
- William Small recommended unanimously to Dean Mayes
- Small employed November 1971

# Small Appointed; Enrollment Goals Established



## **ASSOCIATION NEWS**

*American Journal of Public Health* April 1972;  
p612 -

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.62.4.610>

**William T. Small, Jr.**, has been appointed coordinator of minority affairs for the University of North Carolina School of Public Health, Chapel Hill. Small's role will be to recruit minority group students into the school's ten departments. The present enrollment of minority group students is two per cent of the total, but Small's goal for the fall semester of 1972 is 15 per cent, and 25 per cent by 1975.

# Black Health Course

- Dr. Guy Steuart, Health Education (HEED) chair, invites Caucus members in HEED to design a Black Health Course for the Department
- Original design done under John Hatch's leadership in collaboration with MPH students Sadie Graham, Thornton Haynes, and Anita Holmes
- John Hatch (later appointed to HEED faculty) continued to teach a Black Health course for several years later.

Draft for Discussion

Small

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: The Minority Advisory Committee  
FROM: The Minority Student Group  
RE: The Concerns of the Minority Student Group  
DATE: 2 February 1972 [Was this really from February 1973?]

The events of last semester have brought us to the point wherein it is necessary to determine what our ultimate objective as a group is to be. We have determined that that objective is: to facilitate the creation of "qualified" minority health manpower to meet the health manpower shortage.

To: B. G. Greenberg, Dean  
School of Public Health

*Bette Nelson*

From: The Minority Student Group

Re: Negative Racial Image Projections in Curricula Presentations

Date: November 6, 1972

In a meeting held October 28, 1972, a questionnaire was circulated among thirty-five (35) minority students (this group included all Third World students who participate in the organization, and were present), who had expressed concern around the perceived negative racial image projected in the teaching of curricula in the School. The events prior to this meeting necessitated structuring some device to ascertain exactly what the feelings of minority students were concerning their experiences in the School. Because the School has committed itself to admitting increasing numbers of minority students, and because it has given more than lip service to that commitment, problems that had not manifested themselves

# Survey Findings

Findings of the  
October 1972  
Survey of Minority  
Students about  
their experiences  
at the School

- **Belief:** School had committed itself to admitting increased numbers of minority students and that this commitment was more than lip service
- **More attention** needed to what minority students needed as health professionals upon graduation
- **Belief that the** national health care was centered more than ever before on minority communities; minority perspectives needed to be included in the academic setting
- **Social problems** of that time period and health problems/issues of minority communities were interrelated
- **Students (black and white)** interested in working with minority communities needed better training in the interrelatedness of health and social issues
- **Belief that the faculty alone** not equipped to address this interrelatedness.

# Selected Precursors to the Annual Minority Health Conference

- Survey findings crafted into additional concerns presented to SPH Dean
  - Facilitating better recognition of intersection of social and health problems/needs
  - Improving sensitivity of future health workers (black and white) in dealing with health problems/needs of minority communities
- Recommendations to address these concerns
  - Faculty Seminars on interrelatedness of minority health and social problems, relationship to public health needs, and impact of public health disciplines.
  - Research Seminars that tapped knowledge and talents of Black professionals/researchers and others to address minority health problems/needs
- Seminars mentioned in Caucus minutes:
  - Planned seminars from Mayor Coleman Young and Rep. Barbara Jordan (1974-1975)
  - 1977 Seminar and Workshops on Model, Process and Needs for Minority Research

# Murrell and Jenkins establish “Survival Committee”



- Started informally
- Some students (while bright) lacked adequate preparation for biostatistics and epidemiology
- Support by Jim Murrell expanded with Bill Jenkins’ arrival.
- Mission: No Black student should receive less than a “B” in epidemiology or biostatistics

**MISSION  
ACCOMPLISHED**



**Robert Kelly**

Ph.D. Candidate - Health Administration  
School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Jim Lea, Ph.D.**

Director  
African Health Training Institutes Project  
Carolina Population Center  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Fred Levick**

MPH Candidate - Health Administration  
School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Doris Magwood**

MPH Candidate - Health Administration  
School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Floyd McKissick, J.D.**

President, Soul City Company  
Soul City, North Carolina

**C. Arden Miller, M.D.**

Professor  
Department of Maternal and Child Health  
School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**William Montgomery, Ph.D.**

Deputy Secretary for Health Systems Development  
Pennsylvania Department of Health  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

**Glenn Roane, J.D.**

Director  
Equal Opportunities Program  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

**Earl Siegel, M.D.**

Professor  
Department of Maternal and Child Health  
School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Clay Simpson, Ph.D.**

Associate Administrator for Health Resources  
Opportunity Programs  
Health Resources Administration  
Public Health Service  
Department of Health, Education & Welfare

**Sponsoring School**

School of Public Health  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Bernard G. Greenberg, Ph.D., Dean

**Conference Planning Committee**

Janet Miles  
Derek Daugherty  
Sherry Milan  
Doris Magwood  
Milton Gunn  
Patricia Parker  
Rosylind Frazier  
William Small

# Perspectives On The Health Of Black Populations



**March 30 and 31, 1977**

Cover Design: James Neville

Co-sponsored by the Black Student Caucus and the Student  
Union of the School of Public Health at the University of North  
Carolina at Chapel Hill

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 1977**

- 9:00 a.m. Opening Session - Auditorium, Rosenau Hall  
 Welcome - Bernard G. Greenberg, Ph.D.,  
 Dean  
 Introduction of Program  
 Doris Magwood, Chairperson  
 Black Student Caucus  
 Introduction of Speaker  
 Fred Levick, President, Student Union
- Keynote Address  
 Health, Politics and Economics  
 Mr. Floyd McKissick, J.D.
- 10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. Panel Discussion - *Black Involvement in Health Policy*  
 Donald Ensley, Ph.D., Moderator  
 Public Health Practices and Minorities  
 William Montgomery, Ph.D.
- "How the Federal government is addressing issues of equity in manpower"  
 Clay Simpson, Ph.D.
- Black Manpower in the Health Field  
 E. Lavonia Allison, Ph.D.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

- 2:00 p.m. Panel Discussion  
*Institutional & Attitudinal Barriers in Health Care*  
 Cynthia Jenkins, MSW, Moderator
- The Impact of Racism  
 Audreye E. Johnson, D.S.W.
- The Role of Folk Medicine  
 Ruth Dennis, Ph.D.
- Blacks as Objects of Experimentation  
 William Darity, Ph.D.

4:45 p.m. Social Hour - Student Lounge, School of Public Health

**THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1977****Auditorium - Rosenau Hall**

- 10:00 a.m. Panel Discussion:  
*Rural Health Perspectives*  
 Robert Kelly, MPA, MPH, Moderator
- Panelists:  
 John Hatch, Ph.D.  
 C. Arden Miller, M.D.  
 H. Jack Geiger, M.D.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 2:00 p.m. Panel Discussion:  
*International Health Perspectives*  
 Jeanne Jones, MSW, Moderator
- Nutritional Aspects  
 Joseph Edozien, M.D., Ph.D.
- African Perspectives  
 Glenn Roane, Ph.D.
- Jim Lea, Ph.D.
- Caribbean Perspectives  
 Earl Siegel, M.D.
- 4:30 p.m. Concluding Remarks

**Conference Participants****E. Lavonia Allison**

Director  
 North Carolina Health Manpower Corp.  
 NCNB Bldg., Chapel Hill, N.C.

**William Darity, Ph.D.**

Dean  
 School of Public Health  
 University of Massachusetts at Amherst

**Ruth Dennis, Ph.D.**

Professor  
 Department of Psychiatry  
 Meharry Medical College

**Joseph Edozien, M.D., Ph.D.**

Chairman  
 Department of Nutrition  
 School of Public Health  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Donald Ensley, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor  
 Department of Community Health  
 East Carolina University

**H. Jack Geiger, M.D.**

Chairman and Professor  
 Department of Community Medicine  
 State University of N.Y. at Stony Brook

**Bernard G. Greenberg, Ph.D.**

Dean  
 School of Public Health  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**John Hatch, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor  
 Department of Health Education  
 School of Public Health  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Cynthia Jenkins**

Ph.D. Candidate - Maternal and Child Health  
 School of Public Health  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Audreye E. Johnson, D.S.W.**

Associate Professor  
 School of Social Work  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

**Jeanne Jones**

Ph.D. Candidate - Health Administration  
 School of Public Health  
 University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

The Black Student Caucus and the Student Union Board of the School of Public Health of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are presenting the first in what we hope will be a series of conferences focusing on the unique and special concerns of minority populations.

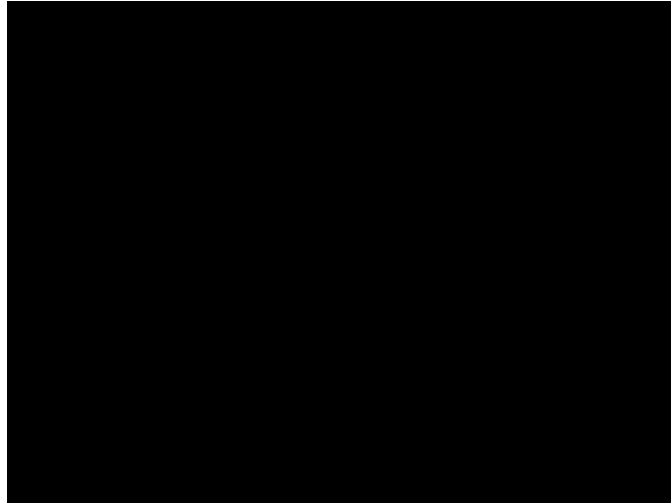
The theme of this year's conference is "Perspectives on the Health of Black Populations." We feel that the subject areas chosen for the focus of this conference are of special concern for public health professionals who will be working with black people. A further rationale in the selection of these areas is that we feel sufficient attention has not been given in the courses in the School of Public Health.

# Unsung Heroes / Not So Hidden Figures



Bill Jenkins gives a Testimonial about Velverton Land (A/V Services) - “Mr. Land”

# Unsung Heroes / Not So Hidden Figures



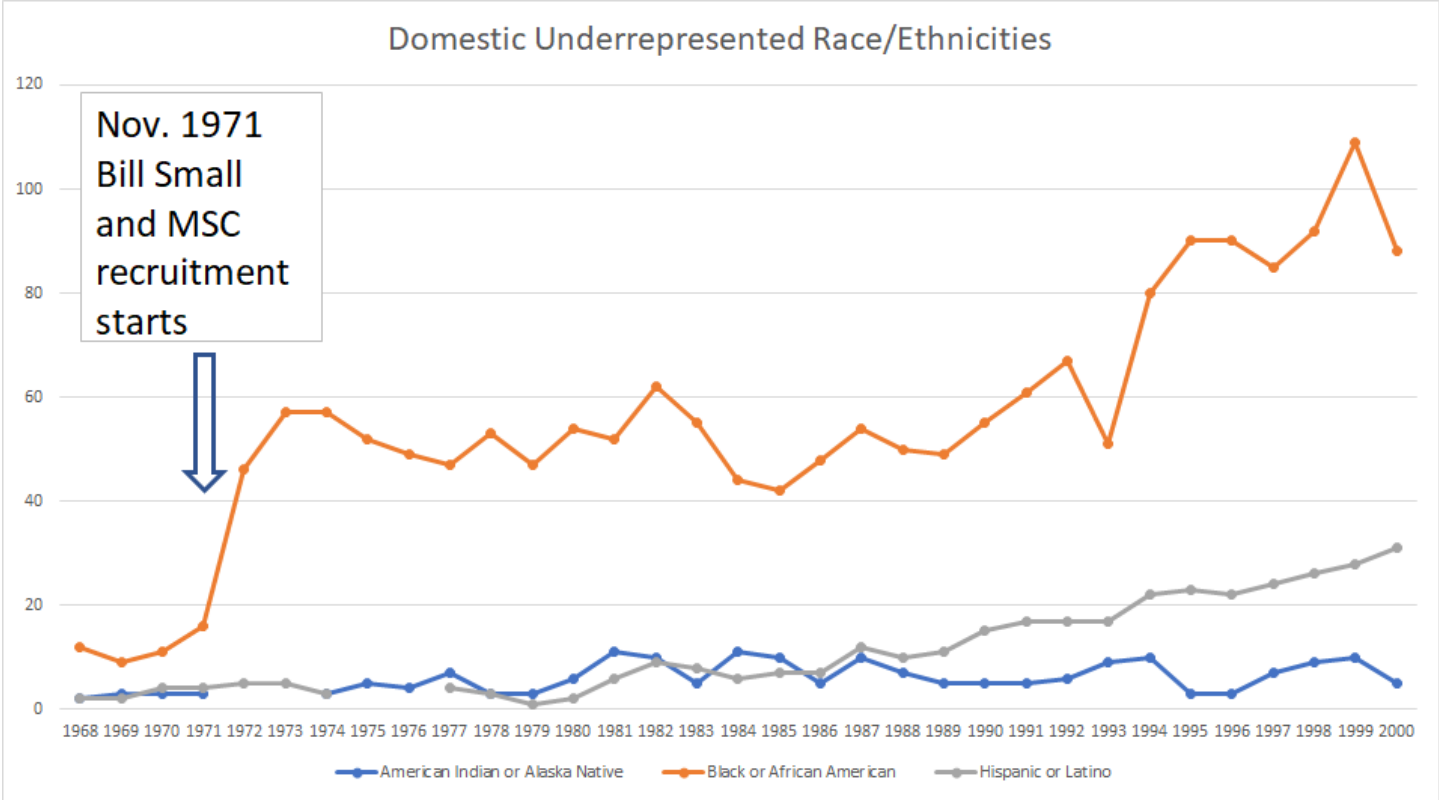
John Hatch speaks about Housekeeping Staff  
including Clyde Brooks

# Unsung Heroes / Not So Hidden Figures

- Mr. Pendergraft (Gardening Tips)
- Who else? Let us know!

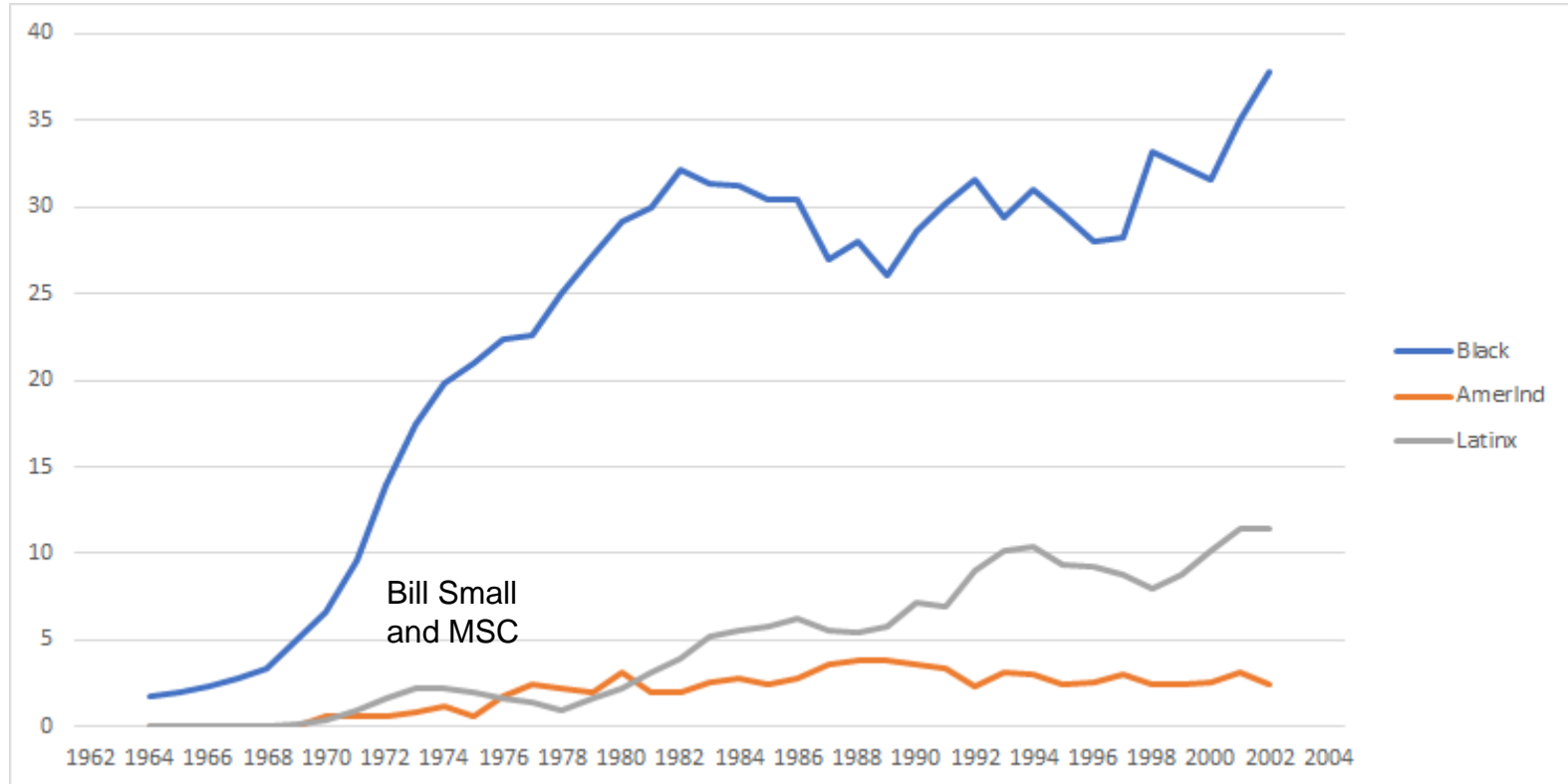


# SPH Black, American Indian, Latinx students, 1968-2000 (domestic)



Data from UNC Infoporte, courtesy of Sritham Thyagaraju and Deytia Lima-Rojas, 2/19/2021.

# African American, American Indian, Latinx Gillings graduates by class year, 1962-2002 (domestic) - 5-year moving averages



## Bill Small Comments - Lucy Morgan Event

*“... at the very top, the administration there was commitment to make change for the better.”*





# Reflections from Members about Their Lived Experiences

- John Hatch
- Walter Isaacs
- Ben Money
- (your reflections here!)

2020 Inclusive Excellence

# Credits and acknowledgements

## UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health:

- Minority Health Conference co-chairs (Rachel Singley and Shewit Weldense)
- Minority Student Caucus co-presidents (Eliana Armora and Snigdha Peddireddy) and advisers
- Dean's Office, including Angelica Figueroa, Lisa Warren, Deytia Lima-Rojas, Julie McManus
- Instructional Media Services, including O.J. McGhee, Denver Dan
- North Carolina Institute for Public Health, including Cherelle Whitfield, Tiffany Farina
- External Affairs, including Sara Wajda
- UNC Wilson Library Special Collections, including Matthew Turi
- UNC Accessibility Resources and Services, including Scarlett Jordan
- UNC Strategic Planning, including Sritham Thyagaraju
- Founders, members, allies, supporters, and family members of the Minority Student Caucus, including Martha Monnett, Fledra Hatch, Jayne Isaacs, Sherry Atkinson, and Marion Schoenbach
- With apologies to people we've omitted.

# Thank You

Visit

<https://go.unc.edu/AnitaHolmes> -

- PDF of the slides
- links to videos
- credits/acknowledgements
- ... and more