

Adkin High School and the Relationships of Segregated Education

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## ABSTRACT

RITA LASHAUN JOYNER: Adkin High School  
and the Relationships of Segregated Education  
(Under the direction of Dr. Carol E. Malloy)

This qualitative research study explores the stories of Black men and women who attended Adkin High School during the years 1928-1970, when education in the rural South was segregated. These stories show how the interrelationships of school, community, family, and church can deeply affect education. The ultimate goal of this study is to add to the body of knowledge of segregated education in the rural South by documenting the relationships and educational experiences of these African American students within their eastern North Carolina community during segregation. This historical ethnography combines historical inquiry and ethnography to chronicle the historical perspective and cultural impact of the relationships centering in this all-Black High School, which no longer exists structurally yet remains culturally preserved through its former students and the Black community in Kinston. This cultural preservation is maintained through the stories of their educational experiences, which are all about the relationships. Beyond stories of the relationships and how they influenced the educational experiences of Adkin High School students, other stories emerged—stories that illustrate how the network of relationships empowered students to resist and struggle against inequities and eventually triumph over them. These stories are no less significant and demand cultural preservation. Many of today’s school reform efforts include recommendations for schools and education professionals to embrace community, include it in student learning, and create a sense of it within the school. Emulating the

interrelationships of segregated Black education will aid school reform leaders and policymakers to improve the educational experiences of African American children.

**In loving memory of**  
**My Daddy**  
**Robert Lee (RL) Joyner**

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*Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

The Doxology by Thomas Ken, 1674

This dissertation study is about relationships and so has the journey been to complete it. There is not enough time and space to acknowledge the ultimate relationship I have with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, my personal Savior and Lord. To God be the glory!

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*In memory of*  
*Edna Barnett Speight*  
*Ollie B. King*  
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*Dr. Andrew Best*  
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*Sen. Jeanne Hopkins Lucas*  
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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*I want children, especially Black children, to be encouraged by learning that academic excellence, educational pride, and cultural awareness are part of their historical DNA. I want the lived experiences of my community ancestors to be engrained and enshrined across this state and nation as a testament to where we have come from that will signal where we are going as a people. My Journal entry, April 2007*

I was born in 1962. Although I can not recall the historic events of that year, I do remember 1968. In a white cap and gown, I graduated from Barnes Nursery School with a diploma in nursery rhymes. It was a private kindergarten in our community located in St. Augustine Episcopal Church. The school was aptly named after my teacher, Mrs. Barnes. Although my classmates and I would scatter across the community to attend our neighborhood elementary schools, the relationships formed during that period have continued over a lifetime. Father Banks, the school's principal, still offers kind words of encouragement when I see him (mostly in the Piggly Wiggly), and I consider all my classmates, including Sonja, Sherry, Karen, Milton, Norwood, and Sylvia, lifelong friends.

I attended the student-segregated/teacher-desegregated elementary school in my community. By then my father had built the second house we would live in, and this move to our new home meant leaving flood-prone Lincoln City for the higher ground of the Holloway Center community. My C.H. Bynum Elementary School teachers were Ford, Pompey, Dail, Murray, Jones, Greene, Tilley, and Malloy. The school principal was Mr. Bryant, and I recall the secretaries – Jenkins, Kornegay, and Sutton. Other school staff I recall were the janitor (Pop-Pop, my Grandfather) and the head cafeteria lady (Miz Leona). I lived within walking distance of all my teachers (except the White ones), the school principal, and staff.

It was not uncommon to see them after school, on weekends, and during school breaks. Some were members of my church.

By 1974, when I graduated from elementary school, the Kinston Public Schools were fully desegregated. This left me with my memories of segregated elementary education and the stories told to me by friends and family of the all-Black high school Adkin High. As the number of voices of those who attended the high school dwindles, it becomes more and more urgent for me to capture their memories of relationships and schooling.

### Statement of the Problem

There is a need to thoroughly document the history of African American education in North Carolina. The North Carolina Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps (Gap Commission) completed its inaugural report of findings and beliefs affecting the achievement gap and outlined recommendations for addressing the pressing need to better educate all children (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2001). The Commission believed that “an inclusive and credible history accurately profiling the educational experiences of American Indians and African Americans” (p. 22) was nonexistent, and the history of the struggle for educating all North Carolina children was “some cause for the current gaps in achievement between majority and minority students” (p. 22). They proposed “that a study be commissioned by the state to examine and profile the history of organized education for American Indians and African Americans in North Carolina” (p. 22).

Seminal works (Siddle Walker, 1996; Cecelski, 1994), research studies (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Philipsen, 1994; Hughes, 2006), and unpublished dissertations (Emerson, 2004; Patterson, 2005; Kelly, 2008) on minority education in North Carolina are available to

address the Commission's concerns. However, there does not appear to have been much progress in the matter since the Department's staff presented its status report on the Implementation Plan for Recommendations from the North Carolina Advisory Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps (2005). The approach and strategies for completing the Commission's recommended study are equally problematic. The broad context of research categories (political, social, historical, and cultural) could draw attention from the lived educational experiences of North Carolina's minorities and the relationships among schools and other institutions (i.e., community, home, religion).

### Purpose of the Study

This study explores the stories of Black men and women who attended Adkin High School when education in the rural South was segregated. These stories show how the interconnected relationships of school, community, family, and church deeply affect education.

My research questions are:

1. What were the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected those attending Adkin High School from 1928-1970?
2. How did these relationships influence the educational experiences of Adkin High School students?

The ultimate goal of this study is to add to the body of knowledge of segregated education in the rural South and to document the relationships and educational experiences of African American students within their eastern North Carolina community during segregation.

### Importance of the Study

Some scholars report only the negative aspects about segregated education (Clift, Anderson & Hulfish, 1962; Kilpatrick, 1962; Philips, 1940). Pulliam and Van Patten (2003) claim that "there was general agreement that minority schools had lower standards" (p. 152).

They further note that this was due to the increased enrollment of “children who were poor and culturally deprived . . . , with less equipment, worse buildings, and teachers with very limited training” (p. 152). In contrast, other researchers and scholars (Hundley, 1965; Sowell, 1974; Siddle-Walker, 1996; Foster, 1997; Cecelski, 1994; Jeffries, 1994; Philipsen, 1994; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Jones, 1981) acknowledge the lack of resources for Black schools during segregation while choosing to accentuate the positives of caring teachers and administrators, high expectations from school, family, and community, and historical-cultural pride in education. The research for my study explores these and other attributes of segregated education to reclaim aspects that will benefit African American youth. African American heritage is rich with stories of educational challenge and triumph that must be preserved and recounted among the present generation.

The Gap Commission, in its inaugural report, articulated the need to formally document the educational history of Blacks in the state (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2001). The Commission noted that such a document would become part of a larger effort to assist teachers and other education professionals to “more comfortably exchange or interact across ethnic/cultural lines in the classroom and beyond” (p. 23). I contend that the importance of this task lies beyond the walls of the school. Education policymakers should know about the historical-cultural experiences of Black segregated education, the impact of music, the arts, and extracurricular activities on student creativity, and the value of educators with caring, nurturing spirits.

Family and community leaders will benefit from the knowledge that I have compiled and now disseminate. As the people who experienced segregated education die out, families and communities will be challenged to provide future generations with the stories that

inspired self-help, self-reliance, and self-determination in the students, teachers, and administrators of that bygone era (Anderson, 1988). These stories, used effectively, will remind families and communities that the responsibility of educating African American children begins and ends with the African American family and community. Asa Hilliard (2001) quotes Dr. John Henrik Clarke, “It is impossible to oppress a consciously historical people” (p. 12). My research, along with the numerous related works on record, can contribute by fortifying Dr. Clarke’s notion of historical consciousness as a means of countering oppression.

Finally, this study is about relationships. It examines the lives of those who forged relationships among school, community, family, and church. It is within these interconnected relationships that the values of education are formed and personal transformations are made manifest. My desire is to complete a body of work documenting a community that exemplified such relationships. The relationships operated together to fight the enemy – racism – with racial pride and self-motivation (Siddle Walker, 2000). Siddle Walker found that the common goal within the segregated Black community was for people to educate their children for a better future and the school was merely an extension of that community. Many of today’s school reform efforts include recommendations for schools and education professionals to embrace community, include it in student learning, and create a sense of it within the school. Emulating the interconnected relationships of segregated Black education will aid school reform leaders and policymakers improve the educational experiences of African American children.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter reviews the literature in the sociohistorical, political, and cultural context of segregated Black education through the lens of interconnected relationships. This review employs an ecological model for the conceptual framework as a means to analyze the relationships and examine their role in the educational experiences of students who attended Adkin High School during segregation.

This first section reviews works related to the history of segregated education in the rural South and the interconnected relationships among school, community, family, and church. This research examines these relationships relative to the educational experiences of segregated education in one North Carolina town. In particular this research answers the following questions:

1. What were the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected those attending Adkin High School from 1928-1970?
2. How did these relationships influence the educational experiences of Adkin High School students?

My review of the literature focuses on five areas: 1) principals and their relationships with family/community, 2) teachers and their relationships with family/community, 3) community involvement with school as the center of community culture, 4) parental/family support relative to school relationships, and 5) the role of church and faith in educational experiences. These five areas provide the underlying focus and purpose of this research. The summary offers a comparative overview between the literature and this study.

First a historical perspective of Black education in the rural South and in North Carolina with emphasis on secondary education, particularly the Black high school, precedes the literature review of the relationships of segregated education.

### Historical Perspective

Secondary public education originated in Massachusetts during the early nineteenth century, with separate institutions for White males and females (Villaverde, 2000; Reese, 1995). It would be several decades before public secondary schools for Blacks were operational in the rural South (Anderson, 1988; Rodgers, 1975). And even as late as 1925, only three of North Carolina's twenty-one accredited Black high schools were located in rural areas. Jim Crow laws and the continued use of Black labor to advance the South's agrarian economy created barriers to Black children's access to secondary education. Anderson writes, "Blacks in the rural South were excluded from the revolution in public secondary education that characterized the nation and the region during the period 1880 to 1935" (Anderson, 1988, p. 186).

### Black Secondary Public Education in the Rural South

A notable change occurred just after the turn of the twentieth century with a partnership created by Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald to increase the number of schools available to rural Southern Blacks (Hoffschwelle, 2006). It was funded by the fortune Mr. Rosenwald accumulated as Sears and Roebuck Company president. Churches and other private institutions were the primary supports of Black secondary education until the creation of the Rosenwald Fund (Anderson, 1988). Agents of the Rosenwald Fund were determined to bring industrial education to the forefront for Negro students interested in learning beyond the elementary level. They provided consultants to survey Southern urban

communities for economically useful jobs for which Black students could be trained. They hired an architect to design industrial high schools and curriculum specialists to oversee the design of courses for enhancing the skills of Black high school graduates for the jobs that they were intended to take (mainly low-level skills jobs). Graduates from these schools could look forward to future employment as seamstresses, domestic workers, porters, and chauffeurs. The strategy of the Rosenwald Fund was to provide levels of funding according to a given community's level of agreement to teach industrial education at the high school. A community would not receive the higher level of funding if it chose to include academic subjects in the curriculum and it would receive no funding if it chose to teach only academics (Anderson, 1988).

In city after city, Rosenwald agents met resistance to the industrial education model for the Black public high school. Black community leaders and parents wanted more for their children than specialized training in the jobs they occupied. Some Whites felt that education for Negroes beyond the elementary level was unnecessary and that industrial education for Blacks would threaten the jobs of Whites. Fund agents assured White people of their intent to not educate Negroes for industrial jobs beyond the ones they traditionally held as revealed by community surveys. In the end, the Rosenwald fund agents conceded the predominant, White notion that Blacks should have at most industrial education only (Anderson, 1988).

The Rosenwald School-Building Program was a collaboration of Rosenwald Fund agents, state agents for Negro schools, and Black Southerners. The Fund's Negro agents were responsible for executing the philosophical and political intent of the program; the White state agents advocated for the program and administered program applications and

funds; and the Black southerners played an integral part in the success of the program (Hoffschwelle, 2006). Black leaders and community activists negotiated all aspects of their school-building program while raising funds for the required matching dollars. In North Carolina, Nathan C. Newbold served as the state agent throughout the program's existence and is credited with creating "the region's most dynamic state program of Rosenwald school construction" (p. 181). Newbold assembled an impressive group of agents and solicited additional resources from the General Education Board and other philanthropic entities, such as the Jeanes and Slater Funds. Newbold also headed the North Carolina Division of Negro Education, touted as "the region's largest and most respected Negro education staff and boasted the greatest number of Rosenwald schools" (p. 206). But it would be the people in Rosenwald school communities who advanced the desire for educational facilities and access to secondary education. Black Southerners, most often led by education professionals and local ministers, were aware of the second tax required for them to construct and maintain their schools while paying taxes to fully fund White schools (Anderson, 1988). Double taxation meant that Black Southerners paid taxes that supported public education for Whites and voluntarily taxed themselves again to fund and construct schools for Black children. They would deed property to the state for school construction, donate building materials, and provide free labor to build schools for their communities. North Carolina was at the forefront of educating Black children.

#### Black Education and the Black High School in North Carolina

In 1823, the North Carolina General Assembly began efforts to provide access to education for its citizens. The Literary Fund Law of 1825 revealed conflicts over funding and access to education for Black children (Rodgers, 1975). The law provided congressional

funding for state public education based on congressional representation which included the number of slaves. In the following years, North Carolina established free countywide common schools for Whites paid for by taxpayers, modified existing laws to require equal treatment and education for White and Black apprentices, and adopted a legislative resolution declaring that “the interests and happiness of the two races would be best promoted by the establishment of separate schools” (p. 26). This post-Civil War resolution of compromise laid the foundation for a dual educational system with both sides gaining desired outcomes as “Black people won control of their schools and White people did not have to attend school with Blacks” (p. 26). In 1865 the North Carolina General Assembly sanctioned Negro education in the state and two private institutions for secondary education were established – Shaw University in Raleigh and Washburn Seminary in Beaufort (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1935).

State-supported public schools for Blacks in North Carolina were established in 1873. However, cities and larger towns across the state had already been operating public schools for Black children for some years (Rodgers, 1975; Emerson, 2004). State support did not necessarily mean financial support. In 1880 the state legislature authorized the town of Goldsboro to establish graded schools using property and poll tax revenues (Logan, 1955) with clarification that

taxes raised from the property and polls of White persons shall be appropriated exclusively to a graded school for White persons, and the taxes raised from the property and polls of colored persons shall be appropriated exclusively to a graded school for colored persons. (p. 347)

Other towns across the state successfully petitioned the legislature for the same division of local school revenue. The following year, concerned White citizens of Goldsboro appealed to the legislature that this act be approved by public vote and the governing body agreed.

Logan (1955) details instances when the measure did not pass in local towns and the reactions from White newspapers. This separation of local school funding by race continued until the North Carolina Supreme Court handed down decisions in 1886 and 1887 overturning the law. Consequently,

Wilson, Goldsboro, Kinston, and other towns and cities in the state abandoned their White graded school system rather than support schools for their Negro children. However, it did not take these local Whites long to see the absurdity of denying school education to their children in order to deny such an education to the Negro children. (p. 256)

It would not be until 1899 that any North Carolina schools would receive state funds and not until 1910 that Black elementary schools would receive consistent state funding (Long, 1932). Rodgers (1975) notes that in 1902 the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that Black children were entitled to a share of school funding equal to that of White children but later clarified the ruling to mean equal facilities as deemed by local authorities.

Just after the turn of the twentieth century, North Carolina started to consider public access to high school education for students. Prior to 1907, secondary education in North Carolina consisted of private schools and public city schools. The state's lawmakers recognized the need for rural Whites to receive additional education and passed the High School Law of 1907 to build facilities in small towns and rural areas. As this occurred during the rise of white supremacy, most boards allowed Black facilities to deteriorate and the funds allocated in the High School Law went to White rural schools (Rodgers, 1975; Long, 1932).

Public secondary schools for Blacks opened, in the form of county training schools, around 1914 with the support from the Slater Fund (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1935). The training schools included Method in Wake County, Smithfield in Johnston County, and Bayboro in Pamlico County. The North Carolina Rosenwald Building

Fund Program was established in 1915, and in 1919 eleven high schools for Blacks were first accredited. All were affiliated with the Black higher education institutions (four state-supported and seven private).

In 1921, the Division of Negro Education was established. The 1921 Report of the Educational Commission of North Carolina described it as follows:

A Division of Negro Education, having one director and such supervisors and assistants as may be necessary, consistent with the appropriation, which is \$15,000. This division is given charge of all normal schools, training schools, high schools, elementary schools, and teacher training departments for Negroes. (p. ix)

Education officials believed that the newly established Division of Negro Education had a positive impact on the Black community. Superintendent E. C. Brooks reported in the 1920-1922 Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction that “the fact that the negroes had representation in the government to whom they could look for guidance gave them a new loyalty to the state. Their cooperation has been phenomenal” (p. 43). This phenomenal cooperation was attributed to the \$100,000 in contributions from rural school Black communities to build schools and maintain facilities. According to the Report, there were four standard public Black high schools at that time, and that number would rapidly increase over a short period of years. In 1923 the state accredited four Black high schools in Durham, Reidsville, Wilmington, and Method (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1935).

Newbold (1928) outlines data over a three-year period, 1924-1927, highlighting the number of public and private four-year accredited high schools for Blacks in North Carolina. He reports there were 33 public and 23 private Black high schools in 1927 that produced 1,575 graduates. Newbold continues that over 50 percent of those graduates proceeded to

higher education institutions and the number of four-year accredited high schools for Blacks would increase in subsequent years.

The sheer increase in the number of Black high schools in North Carolina, particularly in smaller towns and rural areas, resulted from the Rosenwald Fund efforts. Hoffschwelle (2006) uses the North Carolina Rosenwald Building Fund Program as an example both of overall success of the Rosenwald Fund and of the means by which relationships contributed to the advancement of Black education and relationships among the Black community and Black and White education officials on state and local levels. The 1928-1930 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction details monetary contributions totaling \$670,501 and \$655,124 from the Rosenwald Fund and the Black communities, respectively, over a fifteen-year period. It is duly noted in the report that the Black community contributed nearly as much as the foundation. Hanchett (1988) explains the Black community's fundraising efforts in this manner, "... money for the Rosenwald schoolhouses was gathered a penny and a nickel at a time" (p. 415).

In fact, the state had addressed the issue of rural schools for Blacks prior to its involvement with the Rosenwald Fund Program. Newbold was appointed the Black rural school agent in 1913 two years before the first Rosenwald school opened in Chowan County. North Carolina erected more than 800 Rosenwald buildings with no other state surpassing this feat (Hanchett, 1988). These public-private partnerships between the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the Rosenwald Building Fund Program, and grassroots efforts of the Black community created schools, teachers' homes, and other buildings. From 1915 through the end of the Rosenwald Building Fund Program in North Carolina, 813 buildings were constructed. "Of the North Carolina projects, 787 were schoolhouses, 18

were teachers' residences, and 8 were industrial education shops" (p. 408). The North Carolina Rosenwald Building Fund Program personnel included Newbold as the head, a White assistant, and a Black Rosenwald agent. William F. Credle replaced A.T. Atmore as Newbold's assistant and George E. Davis replaced C.H. Moore as the Rosenwald agent when the General Assembly created the Division of Negro Education in 1921. The Rosenwald Building Fund Program continued its building program through 1930, and those efforts contributed to an increase in per pupil funding for Black students across the state. However, funding for Black education rarely approached the level of funding for Whites (Anderson, 1988; Rodgers, 1975). These funding inequities were, in part, reasons for court cases that led to the 1954 landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision.

Like most southern states, North Carolina was not eager to desegregate its schools and sought to create a legal mechanism to circumnavigate the Supreme Court's ruling. The Pearsall Plan to "Save our Schools" was a "state social public policy enacted by the central governmental powers as a manifest response to a perceived impending crisis" (Peebles-Wilkins, 1987, p. 120). Prior to his death in November 1954, North Carolina Governor William B. Umstead appointed an education committee to make recommendations in response to the *Brown* decision. This geographically diverse committee included three Black state employees. The 1955 General Assembly and Governor Luther Hodges endorsed the committee's findings:

The mixing of races forthwith in the public schools throughout the state cannot be accomplished and should not be attempted. The schools of our state are so intimately related to the customs and feelings of the people of each community that their effective operation is impossible except in conformity with community attitude. The committee feels that a compulsory mixing of the races in our schools on a statewide basis and without regard to local conditions and assignment factors other than race would alienate public support of the schools to such an extent that they could not be operated successfully. (p. 109)

During the 1955 General Assembly Session, legislators approved the creation of an Advisory Committee on Education and Governor Hodges appointed two members from the Senate, two members from the House, and two public citizens to the committee. Blacks were not included (Peebles-Wilkins, 1987). Senator Thomas Pearsall was appointed chair of the committee (hence the name of the plan). The 1955 General Assembly Session also passed a resolution opposing the Brown decision and enacted the 1955 Pupil Assignment Act. This Act was an administrative directive for local education agencies on school transfers and reassignments. “In practice, these procedures resulted in lengthy form completion processes, personal interviews and the like for Black students and fairly routine transfers for White students” (p. 113).

Governor Hodges and the Advisory Committee on Education urged Blacks to endorse segregated schools (Peebles-Wilkins, 1987). Pearsall, in a 1955 speech to the State School Board Association, urged support of Governor Hodges’ plan for voluntary segregation or “Freedom of Choice” in response to local school desegregation. He reminded them of the efforts Blacks and Whites undertook in working together to educate all children. State officials believed that desegregating schools would erode public support for public schools and create a crisis in education. In response to the impending crisis, Hodges called a special session of the General Assembly to place the issue before North Carolina voters. The Pearsall Plan passed by majority vote, and the Public School Law of the state constitution was amended to include the Pearsall Plan and the 1955 Pupil Assignment Law. Features of the plan included: “(1) a local option provision permitting the suspended operation of public schools by popular vote of the local community if school conditions were deemed intolerable; (2) educational expense grants to private schools for children whose parents

objected to their attending school with a child of another race; and (3) repeal of the compulsory school attendance requirements when a segregated school experience was not immediately available to those objecting to desegregation” (p. 114).

Blacks in North Carolina responded in protest to the Pearsall Plan even though the state received national recognition for the plan in complying with the Brown decision. Successful litigation by Blacks would result in the repeal of a portion of the plan addressing private school grants, and by the 1957-58 school year a handful of Black children were attending White schools in Greensboro, Charlotte, and Winston-Salem (North Carolina General Assembly Resolution 2008-16). School desegregation, in earnest, across North Carolina was not fulfilled until several years after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Rodgers (1975) offers an appendix of data related to the state’s Black high schools in 1963-64 (the last year North Carolina maintained separate records under its dual education system). He reports that of the 226 Black high schools – 211 (72.1 percent) were accredited by the state and 49 (21.7 percent) were approved by the Southern Accreditation Association; enrollment totaled 85,948 students; there were 3,401 Black high school teachers; 67 percent of Black students entering ninth grade graduated in four years; and,

in the majority of instances (twenty-eight state budget expenditure items), Black staff and schools received a smaller percentage of the funds than the percentage (31 percent) of Black high schools represented of the total number of high schools in the state. (p. 107)

### Relationships of Segregated Education

It is well documented that slaves and freedmen of the American South valued education (Williams, 2005; Anderson, 1988). Emancipated Negroes wanted to become equal citizens and, like White people, wanted to provide education for their children. The latter desire, being shared, was the driving force for common school education for all children in

the South (Bullock, 1967; Anderson, 1988). The process of educating Black children in the South involved Northern White philanthropists, missionaries, and teachers; Southern White sympathizers; and, more importantly with the emergence of Jim Crow, the Black community. Delanty (2003) offers multiple perspectives for defining community, and for this research I view the Black community as the racial collective of individuals within and outside of the segregated schools. Rodgers (1975) offers the following definition of the Black community that I will use. He defines the Black community as:

1. those who are directly involved in the schools, such as teachers, principals, and other school employees and students;
2. those indirectly involved in the school, such as parents of students, younger siblings; and
3. those even less directly involved in the school, including those who attended the school and still live in the area, and those who never attended, but make use of its facilities or attend and/or support school activities, such as sports and other extracurricular activities. (p. 39)

The primary focus of this literature review is to describe studies that examine these interconnected relationships within the Black community during the era of segregated education. Studies focusing on the Black high school are of particular interest to my research. My view of the impact of the Black high school during segregation can be summarized by Rodgers (1975):

It is important to examine the Black high school as it previously existed as a basis for describing and documenting its positive contributions and the associated facets and interrelationships to the Black community in particular and the larger community in general. The Black high school was a world of its own, with its own dynamic quality and its own ecological structure. It played a definite and specific role in the lives of people who touched it and were touched by it. (p. 11)

#### Principals and Their Relationships with Family/Community

“The principal was the man who ran the school and in many cases ran the Black community” (Rodgers, 1975, p. 16).

In most of the literature on segregated education, the principal is the central, major figure in the school and community (Siddle Walker, 1996; Jones, 1981; Davis, 1996; Rodgers, 1975). In one case, there was not a deliberate focus on the school's principal other than mentioning a select teacher who served as principal and lead teacher for the better part of her multiple decades there (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996).

Siddle Walker (1996) focuses on the Caswell County Training School's lead administrator in all aspects of her study's view of community-valued education. The principal is credited with spearheading the community's efforts to establish secondary education for its children while working with the necessary outsiders (such as the county school board and state education leaders) to secure adequate funding. He is described as being charismatic, stern, kind, considerate, and genuinely concerned about the overall welfare of his students. His interaction with the community included being involved in civic activities and consulting with local ministers when a matter needed communitywide attention. This principal led efforts to recruit college-bound students and to entice recent graduates from the community to return home to teach. He was known for his diplomatic interactions with teachers, parents, and students, which always included words of advice and counsel. Parents admired his wit and willingness to share his experiences of attending state and national conferences. In turn, he encouraged teachers to attend similar professional meetings and stay abreast of educational trends and reforms outside the school district.

This sense of professionalism and organization extended to the principal's involvement in the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA). At some schools, the principal is credited with starting the PTA (Jones, 1981; Davis, 1996). Jones interviewed three former principals of the school and reported favorable responses from them regarding relationships

with parents and the community. They spoke of being involved in the PTA and civic affairs, and one principal noted that he divided the city into segments, designated trusted parents to keep him abreast of the “community attitudes about the school (not gossip) and called on them when a child in their area was in need of help which was not available from home or elsewhere” (p. 61).

The principal is cited as being interested in the student’s welfare and encouraging them to make him and their family proud (Jeffries, 1994); he is often remembered as being tough but fair (Siddle Walker, 1996). Rodgers (1975) best summarized the role of the principal in segregated education in terms of the multiple roles he played as (Black) superintendent, school administrator, supervisor, family counselor, financial advisor, community leader, employer, and politician.

#### Teachers and Their Relationships with Family/Community

“Black kids need teachers who can understand and appreciate something about Black communities” (Foster, 1997, p. 61).

The teacher is a vital and integral component of segregated education (Siddle Walker, 1996; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Jones, 1981; Cecelski, 1994; Philipsen, 1994; Foster, 1997). School personnel served as role models and leadership figures for students. Teachers had high expectations of students, found opportunities to foster leadership skills within their classrooms, helped students discover their talents and interests, and challenged them to become well-prepared for the future despite lacking and inadequate resources for learning. Teachers had “a sense of mission” in their zeal to equip students with the tools to be contributing members of society, and they believed that education was paramount to racial uplift and upward mobility (Cecelski, 1994). Teachers challenged students to excel in their academic endeavors so they could be fully prepared for the world beyond their rural setting.

Teachers offered students a dose of reality when they admonished them not to think they could get well-paying local jobs with inadequate education (like the local Whites could who inherited land), and they encouraged a sense of community obligation in their expectations that the brighter students would return home to teach.

Teachers at Caswell County Training School were caring, nurturing souls who went to sacrificial lengths in educating the whole child (Siddle Walker, 1996). It was not unheard of for teachers to provide transportation, clothing, and even monetary assistance to needy students. These teachers had high expectations for every child regardless of his or her intellectual level and took every opportunity to encourage students to work hard and believe in themselves despite the external forces of racism and segregation. Teachers were determined to provide students with opportunities and expose them to knowledge and activities relevant to their current interests and environments and the future that awaited them. The interactions between teachers and parents, highlighted in Siddle Walker's study, occurred at school and in the community. Teachers actively participated in PTA meetings and worked with parents on PTA fundraising events. It was not uncommon for teachers and parents to engage in informal conversations about students after church or in other public places. Teachers were considered an integral part of the community and were expected to be familiar with parents and the community at large. For those teachers native to the community in which they taught, it was common for them to know most of the parents or family members of their students (Jones, 1981). Philipsen (1994) notes that "Black teachers and administrators are remembered as well-respected and competent community members" (p. 263).

In similar fashion, Noblit and Dempsey (1996) describe Rougemont School teachers as pillars of the community who “fulfilled an educational and ideological role” (p. 128). Teachers took responsibility for preparing students for the world beyond their classrooms, and they considered it a moral duty to make each student strive to be the best he or she could be. They were expected to attend all functions at the school and to have a presence in the community even though many of them did not live there. This would not have been a burden for the teachers because of the high regard and respect given to them by the community. The authors give an account of teachers being given podium-time to speak to church members when they attended services. One student recalled, “There was prestige. My parents thought preachers were good, but teachers were great!” (p. 129).

A prime example of the spirit of cooperation between teachers and parents relates to discipline because teachers trusted that they could depend on parents in matters of discipline and academic achievement (Philipsen, 1994; Jones, 1981). Stories abound throughout segregated-education literature of students’ understanding the severe consequences at home if they were disciplined at school. A culture of caring was exhibited even under circumstances that could be considered harsh by an outsider. Teachers visited homes, and parents automatically assumed that the school had their child’s best interest at heart and was reinforcing their home values.

#### Community Involvement and School as the Center of Community Culture

The strong public school experience there [at Dunbar High] was interwoven with a supportive family experience (often extended family, positive church participation, and cohesive community interest). The family and community supported school efforts, and the school uniquely served the Black community. (Jones, 1981, p. 71)

Segregated education literature explicitly designates the school as a center of culture in the Black community (Siddle Walker, 1996; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Cecelski, 1994;

Davis, 1996). The school was made available for uses outside the regular school day and was considered a major institution of the community. Caswell County Training School offered after-hours vocational classes to adults, made the school's gymnasium available to the community, and even provided volunteer teachers to aid returning World War II veterans in basic skills classes. Community involvement extended to student participation in church events and civic gatherings where students' skills and talents could be displayed and school personnel could interact with local citizens. Additionally, the community made housing available to school personnel new to the community or in need of lodging during the week. The school served as a community center with civic groups using facilities for meetings and events and the school's providing space to teach adults and others not enrolled there (Cecelski, 1994).

According to Noblit and Dempsey (1996), the school was "the community's ultimate cultural symbol, and reflected the basic patterns and beliefs of the neighborhood" (p. 128). The school was a community extension of the familial atmosphere of shared responsibility and commitment. In one case, a group of community women would regularly attend the school's weekly assemblies and community members held appreciation lunches for teachers (Davis, 1996) while in another instance the school held monthly assemblies and invited the community to attend (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996). The school and community worked together on fundraisers for needed school supplies.

Most importantly, Black schools were built and maintained with community support. In the early 1900s, the community came together to build a school of their own and their motivations were clearly a desire to maintain a self-sufficient community in the face of segregation (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996.) Cecelski (1994) includes a laundry list of

community efforts including the donation of land. He notes that the older students and community members completed numerous improvement projects at the school from landscaping to building expansions. Community members furnished supplies and opened their homes to teachers and students in need, and parents and graduates raised funds for major equipment purchases and textbooks.

In Davis' recollection (1996), the community fully supported the school with financial contributions for band uniforms, athletic gear, and major school equipment. Early on, the PTA and the community rallied to raise money for an additional building. During World War II, students, faculty, and the community collaborated to support the war effort in various ways. The school sold and purchased War Bonds and Defense stamps. In one instance, the students had collected 2,000 pounds of scrap iron to contribute to the war efforts, and "James Chadwick, a Black veteran of World War I, contributed scrap iron that he had been collecting for twenty-four years, to the school" (p. 39) which greatly increased the school's donation. In 1952, the students protested the horrid conditions of the school building and the local school board's denial to construct a gymnasium. Students and parents met at a local church the night before the planned protest, which lasted three days, during which students boycotted classes. It would take seven years for the gymnasium to be completed.

#### Parental/Family Support relative to School Relationships

Family support of schools is evident in their efforts to build them and provide an education for their children (Siddle Walker, 1996; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Cecelski, 1994; Davis, 1996). Siddle Walker (1996) chronicles the years of the families of Caswell County's struggle to receive adequate facilities and transportation. These families were willing to

donate their financial and human resources. They were also not above making demands on local and state officials for assistance. Parents were active participants in PTA activities and mainly left school governance in the hands of the education professionals. The Queen Street PTA annually sent delegates to the White state PTA conference (Davis, 1996), and Sowell (1974) emphasized the importance of parental involvement in the success of Dunbar High.

Parents at Rougemont School recognized the value of education and undertook valiant efforts to build a school in their community (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996). They were highly involved in the PTA, assisted teachers with school events, and were supportive of teachers when they needed to discipline students (they would generally reinforce or repeat actions taken by the teachers or principals). One memorable highlight involving parents was the annual school picnic in the park across from the school. Parental participation ensured that the event was reminiscent of a church picnic or a family gathering where the children ate and played games. Family and community members were directly involved in the curricular and other activities of the school as well.

#### Role of Church and Faith in Educational Experiences

“I owe that to my religion, to my family, and to my school, because that was something that was schooled in me” (Jeffries, 1994, p. 293).

Community and school life naturally intertwined. Lincoln and Mamiya (2003) note that “An officially segregated society contributed to the dominant role Black churches were able to maintain as one of the few cohesive institutions to emerge from slavery. Talented Black men and women developed their leadership skills in Black churches and used them as launching pads for professional careers in the church or elsewhere in Black society like education, music, and entertainment (p. 383).”

The Hyde County Training School principal expected students to attend Sunday School, where academic lessons could be reinforced. Teachers attended church with students and served as mentors outside the classroom (Cecelski, 1994). In the historic five-month protest against the closing of Black schools because of desegregation, the “Committee of 14” led the boycott, which was organized by and got its name from a church deacon who recruited most of the boycotters- “two persons from each of the seven key congregations, involving every local denomination” (p. 73). According to Cecelski, “The churches were a natural forum for the school crisis” (p. 73) because “Black life revolved... around the church and the school, the “preacher and the teacher” (p. 73).

Siddle Walker (1996) notes the involvement of prominent ministers in the community who, along with other community leaders, were solicited by the school principal in his efforts to extend education beyond the elementary level for Blacks in Caswell County. He also used local churches as an avenue to encourage students to enroll in the high school. The author notes that Caswell County Training School teachers, alarmed at the seemingly growing number of dropouts, visited local churches to speak with congregants about the importance of students staying in school.

Some interactions between school and church are noted in a program presented by a school’s Hi-Y Club at Purvis Chapel AME Zion (Davis, 1996). The Hi-Y Club’s purpose was “to create, maintain, and extend throughout the school and community higher standards of Christian character” (p. 41). The school also helped this church raise money for its higher education institution Livingstone College.

Beverly (2007) found that study participants who solely attended segregated schools explicitly mentioned the importance of school and church. Narrators spoke of the close

proximity of school and church and of their overlapping ideals. Hanchett (1988) writes (referencing the efforts of a Black Rosenwald agent in the community) that “Often he would begin afresh with the congregation and elders of a country church. In a region where Whites discouraged Black participation in nearly any organized activity, churches provided the single strong institutional framework for Afro-American endeavors” (p. 414).

Siddle Walker (2000) excludes religious influences from her review of studies on African American education in the South. The role of the Black church and faith in segregated education deserves to be studied and documented. Although she chose not to include church and faith in her review, most of the studies I cite mentioned these influences and the impact on segregated educational experiences. The relationships among the church and faith, family, community, and school require a framework for examining these interconnections.

### Conceptual Framework

Morris (2004) found a school in his research study of St. Louis schools “had excellent principals, committed teachers, a love ethic for Black children, and a strong connection with the communities where the children lived” (p. 104). These are the same characteristics cited by authors whose work I have surveyed thus far. My work, like Morris’s, focuses on the interconnections of school, family, and community. My study probes for evidence of similar characteristics and corresponding relationships pertaining to Adkin High School. Like Morris, I use Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model as my conceptual framework for exploring the relationships among school, community, family, and church in an all-Black high school during segregation.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed an ecological system in order to categorize the interconnected settings of an environment and its people to explain human development. His system portrayed by nested concentric circles representing distinct relationships and influences on people. Bronfenbrenner (1974) posits that “an ecological orientation points to the additional importance of relations *between systems* as critical to the child’s development (e.g., the interaction between home and school, family and peer group)” (p. 4). The nested arrangement of circles includes the microsystem as the inner most circle, then the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the outermost macrosystem.

The microsystem is a single setting involving the child in various activities, roles, and relationships. These single settings occur at home, school, church, etc.

The mesosystem is constituted by the interrelationships between two or more microsystems. This interaction between single settings could include relationships involving the home, school, and community.

The exosystem consists of settings that do not directly involve the child but would influence the child’s development. The parents’ workplaces, actions of education policymakers, and community initiatives are examples of this system.

The macrosystem encompasses the patterns of the inner-nested systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that “exist, or could exist, at the level of the subculture or the culture” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26). However, this system “differs for various socioeconomic, ethnic, religious, and other subcultural groups, reflecting contrasting belief systems and lifestyles” (p. 26).

Morris (1997) adds that Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model does not explicitly consider a “groups’ historical and social experiences” as “African Americans have different

educational experiences in comparison to White Americans because of the social, cultural, political, economic, and other external forces that shape the social contexts for both African Americans and White Americans” (p. 26). Similarly, Renn (2003) acknowledges the model’s limitations as a two-dimensional figure without consideration of time trajectories and notes that Bronfenbrenner later added the chronosystem as a time element to his ecological model to “operate at a sociohistorical level as well as at an individual level according to the timing of life events in the microsystems” (p. 390).

Understanding the limitations of the Bronfenbrenner ecological model, I have adapted the model to my own purposes so that I can analyze the relationships among school, community, family, and church in the educational experiences of Adkin High School students. I utilize the mesosystem dimension of the Bronfenbrenner ecological model as the conceptual framework to investigate those relationships and the role they played in the educational experiences of high school students during segregation in North Carolina.

### Summary

The school principal and teachers in a segregated school served as leaders in the community as well. The principal was held in high esteem and embraced his roles within and outside of the school walls. Mostly male in gender, the principal recognized the importance of education to the Black community, navigated the school’s needs within White school leadership, and became a symbol of racial uplift and pride in the community (Siddle Walker, 2003; Tillman, 2004; Edwards, 1999). The literature is replete with studies and research of the Black teacher during segregation and the period just after desegregation (Littlefield, 2003; White, 2002; Siddle Walker, 2001; McCullough-Garrett, 1993; Givens, 1997; Jeffries, 1999; Kelly, 2008). Black teachers had high expectations of their students

often encouraging them to look beyond the current circumstances toward a promising future. Beyond their nurturing and caring spirits, Black teachers regarded themselves as highly professional and capable of completing their academic missions. In addition to believing that they should be involved in the community, Black teachers believed that they should receive community support (Siddle Walker, 2001).

The Black school was an extension of the Black community and oftentimes was the center of community culture. Milner and Howard (2004) write that “Black schools, along with Black churches, were frequently considered to be the hubs or center points of their respective communities” (p. 293). Community involvement included a wide range of activities and support. Community members raised funds for building construction and supplies, provided housing for teachers, supplied transportation to school and extracurricular events, and engaged in political affairs on the school’s behalf.

Black family support of and involvement in schools closely reflected the community as the families made up the community at large. Inadequate school funding motivated families who believed that education was the key to success (Siddle Walker, 2000). Families participated in large-scale school improvement projects and supplied baked goods and the like for fundraisers, school socials, and classroom activities. Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) served a primary role as a clearinghouse for sharing information. Attendance at PTA meetings, school concerts and performances, and athletic events gives testimony to family support for student well-being and Black education (Siddle Walker, 2000). Equally important as financial support was the intangible support families provided through their belief in school leaders and personnel to educate their children. Families sent students to school expecting that they would respect authority, learn, and have racial pride.

The families' expectation was shared by the Black church. Black clergy, community leaders, and education professionals recognized the value of education and worked in tandem to fight the injustices of inequitable resources and to achieve educational excellence.

Billingsley and Caldwell (1991), referencing empirical studies conducted in the last century, note that "the findings from these three studies show that the Black church, family, and educational institutions can interact to provide a major resource for strengthening African American communities" (p. 431). The authors conclude that the Black church stands as the most probable ally of the community and its school in educating Black children.

My study closely resembles the works of others (Siddle Walker, 1996; Cecelski, 1994; Davis, 1996) in terms of geographical location in a rural setting, lack of pseudonyms to represent participants (Siddle Walker, 1996, Cecelski, 1994; Davis, 1996), and segregated education as its primary focus (Siddle Walker, 1996; Davis, 1996). All of the sources I review are qualitative in their data and method except for Jones (1981) and Rodgers (1967) that used a questionnaire to quantify the experiences of segregated education.

Emphasis on the interconnected relationships among school, community, family, and church is an extension of the works of literature reviewed here. I view segregated education through the lens of interconnected relationships, not through individuals. I examine those relationships relative to the sociohistorical, political, cultural, and other influences on students at an all-Black high school.

Rodgers (1975) chose to examine and document the "positive contributions and the associated facets and interrelationships of the all-Black high school to the Black community and the larger community in general" (p. 11). The author concluded that "As a state, North Carolina probably operated one of the best Black school systems under the dual system of

education” (p. 11). He attributed this to the high level of support for Black higher education and the state’s five Black public higher education institutions. His study focused on North Carolina and the 1963-64 academic year (the last year the state kept dual system records).

Unlike Rodgers who used primary documents along with questionnaires and interviews with principals and superintendents, in this study, I gather voices of students and community members to explore the educational experiences (positive, negative, and indifferent) at Adkin High School. My study extends the work of Siddle Walker (1996) and related literature (Siddle Walker, 2000) to include the role of church and faith (which is not explicitly considered in these works). Based on my memories and the stories told to me about the relationships between school and church/faith, church and faith should not be overlooked. While most research on segregated education fail to emphasize the importance of the school as the center of community culture, I view this as a gap that needs filling.

Finally, the North Carolina Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps designed Recommendation 11 of its 2001 report to address a pressing need for students and teachers to have working knowledge of the state’s minorities’ educational history and experiences. This study adds to the body of literature that can provide that working knowledge.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Some research topics lend themselves best to qualitative research methodology and this study of segregated education is certainly one of them. Qualitative research methods provide the avenue to explore the humanistic elements that shaped the lives of Adkin High School students and to capture the educational experiences and interconnected relationships among school, community, family, and church.

#### Research Design – Historical Ethnography

Siddle Walker (1996) outlines her use of historical ethnography in her seminal volume on segregated education, *Their Highest Potential*. She notes that her ethnohistory of Caswell County Training School combines historical inquiry and methodology to reconstruct the school's chronological history and "to convey a sense of another time and place" (p. 221). She used ethnography as a means to explore the culture of this institution, which no longer exists, through the perspectives of its former members. Siddle Walker started with this single question: What was it about the school, personnel, and community that made these stories worth collecting? From these stories, she proposed themes and analytic characterizations that attribute value to that community and to the education community at large. Rodgers (1975) notes that there is a need for a historical perspective if the goal is to describe the factors that shaped the operations and relationships of segregated education. Both methodologies (historical and ethnographical) are "concerned with not only apprehending educational history, but also the recognition of how people construct the story from the past, in the present, for the future" (Hughes, 2003, p. 25). Similarly, Noblit and

Dempsey (1996) employ the term ethnohistory in their noted work on school desegregation. They gathered stories to create a historical account of the events that took place and sought to find meaning in the constructions the authors and the narrators had created together. They also noted the present and future use of their work. In the present, the performance of the constructed stories was made available to the wider school community. The recorded documents are preserved for future researchers and are accessible to those interested in educational reform. Hughes (2003) argues that historical ethnography and ethnohistory are similar in terms of their approaches, perspectives, and outcomes.

### Oral History Interviews

Sommer and Quinlan (2002) offer a straightforward definition of oral history. They maintain that oral history is recorded voices about things in the past. Lanman and Mehaffy (1988) define oral history as “a method of inquiry that seeks to preserve the memories of individuals that shaped or participated in the events of the past (p. i)”. Oral history is conducted in an interview setting, with a structured, well-researched interview protocol, with person(s) who witnessed or experienced a past event. The interviewer upholds ethical and moral standards, chooses appropriate equipment usage, and preserves the documents for future researchers in an accessible repository (Ritchie, 2003). Oral history is an interactive process.

Plummer, in *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to Critical Humanism*, writes that oral history is a fragmented social movement that seeks to track, retrieve, record, and preserve voices that may not otherwise become part of a historical record. According to Plummer (2001), oral history is not as straightforward as it used to be. Reflexive stories are composed, invented, and made up. It is more complex than simply getting a person to talk

about memories and the past. Oral history narratives are co-constructed. The narrator gives an account of the experiences he or she chooses, the interviewer asks selected questions and makes decisions on what to include from the interaction, the text displays the results of that interaction, and the reader interprets the finished product.

### Observation

Glesne (2006) outlines the process of observation and the role of the researcher in it. She notes that the process is different from our daily observations of people and events. For the researcher, the process entails systematic practices, detailed recordings, and adequate time dedicated to capturing detailed descriptions. The researcher's role is to observe the obvious, the not-so-obvious, the overall scene, and the absence of activity. Patton (2002) addresses six dimensions for describing variations in observational methods: 1) variations in observer involvement, 2) emic (insider) and etic (outsider) approaches, 3) collaboration and participatory research, 4) overt versus covert observations, 5) duration of observations, and 6) observational focus. He acknowledges the ongoing tension between researchers who choose to use only the emic or only etic approach. Patton (2002) states that "Methodologically, the challenge is to do justice to both perspectives during and after fieldwork and to be clear with one's self and one's audience how this tension is managed" (p. 268).

### Archival History

According to Glesne (2006), documents and artifacts substantiate the interviews and observations. They generate questions for interviews, corroborate or dispute interview findings, and provide the platform for the historical context of the research study. However, Patton (2002) cautions against analysis of incomplete or inaccurate documents and stresses

the importance of triangulating documents with interviews and observations from multiple perspectives.

### Site Selection

Kinston is the county seat of Lenoir County, located in southeastern North Carolina (Powell, 1963). In 1759 the General Assembly passed legislation to establish three tobacco inspection warehouses in Dobbs County (changed to Lenoir in 1791, the year of the county seat's designation). In 1762, the same governing body created Kingston (named for King George III), with the "g" being dropped in 1784 after the Revolutionary War. The town was incorporated in 1826.

Geographically, Kinston is centrally located in eastern North Carolina. The city is 44 feet above sea level and the Neuse River and its various streams and tributaries run through it. The population increased from 455 to 24,819 in the 110-year span between 1850 and 1960. During a brief 60 year period, 1820 to 1860, Negroes outnumbered Whites in Lenoir County (Powell, 1963).

Kinston has a rich heritage of commerce, agriculture, and transportation. It was called the "World's Foremost Tobacco Center" after county farmers moved from cotton to tobacco for its economic mainstay. The Reverend R.S. Oden (1919) writes:

During tobacco season hundreds of people come to the city to work in tobacco, for which they receive excellent wages. There are many kinds of other business that give employment to hundreds of people, such as cotton mills, lumber plants, and fertilizer plants. (p. 13)

In subsequent years, local and national textile mills would locate there.

Kinston is my hometown, and I selected this site because of my desire to chronicle the history of Black education there. Initially, the focus of my work was Kinston College. I wanted to know how and why this community embraced the notion of establishing a

“college” in my childhood neighborhood and playground, Lincoln City. I learned that the school closed in 1931, that the number of available firsthand narrators who knew about the “college” was severely limited, and it was, essentially, a high school rather than a normal school as I had originally thought. Edna Speight, 101 years old at the time I interviewed her for the pilot study, shared penetrating insight. She recalled that when students graduated from Kinston College they became teachers for the elementary school students there. In her opinion, some of those teachers left much to be desired in their knowledge and abilities. She said, “It was years before I knew that ‘gi-ra-fee’ was really [pronounced] ‘giraffe’....” Fortunately, Kinston continued its tradition of secondary Black education at Adkin High School. Rev. Oden (1919) writes that “Kinston has a very good school system for both races, and her citizens are working hard to improve it. There are many nice churches for both races in the city, and two denominational schools for the colored race” (p. 13).

Adkin High School opened in 1928. In prior years, Black children attended Tower Hill School, where instruction included first through eleventh grades (Lenoir County Historical Association, 1981). Johnson and Holloman (1954) recorded few details about Adkin High and Black education in Kinston. They dedicated only eight lines to Kinston College, faculty specifics on “the colored school” (not Adkin High), and the following:

During the past eight years...a Negro elementary school has been built on the Tower Hill Road at a cost of \$526,000 plus \$27,500 for equipment. The Adkin High School for Negroes has been enlarged by an annex and a gymnasium and vocational buildings costing \$160,000 plus \$17,800 for equipment (p. 412).

Compare this to the total spending on White schools during that same period – \$515,000 on buildings (\$242,000 on a new gymnasium) and \$65,000 for equipment. \$151,000 more was spent on Negro schools than on White schools, even though there were significantly fewer Negro students than White.

Total enrollment in Kinston schools, cited in the 1954 work of Johnson and Holloman, was 4,518 (2,767 Whites and 1,751 Negroes). As reported in the 1928-1930 Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction – Table of Colored High Schools, Kinston had one high school (Adkin High), with none in Lenoir County. The school had a I-B classification; a 36-week term, four grades (8-11), and six fulltime teachers (three of each gender) and one part-time female teacher. During 1928-1929, 124 students were enrolled, with an average daily attendance of 93 students; in 1929-1930, 154 students were enrolled, with an average daily attendance of 126 students. By 1952 the average daily attendance was 400 Adkin High School students, which included 179 boys and 221 girls (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1952).

#### Pilot Study

I chose Kinston College as the research site for my first qualitative methods course. At that time my data consisted mainly of vivid memories of the worn and ragged buildings in my neighborhood. However, I clearly heard and felt the pride I heard in the voices of those elders when they said the words, “Kinston College.” I did not know that the college was a private, coeducational normal school that closed in 1931. Determined more than ever to document this emerging story of early twentieth century segregated education, my goal was to find students who attended Kinston College or their siblings or children who could assist in my final project assignment.

As expected, archival data providing the history of Kinston College was limited, and the human resources available were similar in quantity but not quality. Of the three interviewees, two had attended Kinston College and all of them grew up in Lincoln City as I did. One interviewee’s father had been a teacher and trustee member of the College.

After transcribing and reviewing the collected data for what themes I might find, I discovered in myself a desire to explore the interconnected relationships among school, community, family, and church as my dissertation topic. This would not be feasible using Kinston College as a research site. However, I discovered that the interviewees usually mentioned educational experiences and relationships at Adkin High School.

### Participants

Participants for the study were found primarily through the national and local chapters of the Adkin High School Alumni and Friends Association. I pursued interviews with people based on the following categories that emerged from the stories told to me – Pioneer Pirates; Valedictorians/Salutatorians/Most Likely to Succeeds; I went to Adkin, but ...; Sacrificing Pirates. The Pioneer Pirates are Adkin High School graduates who are among the group of oldest living Pirates. My first priority was to gather life stories of students, school personnel, and community leaders who had recollections of Adkin High's earliest years of operation. I got the idea to interview the Valedictorian group while attending the church service at the 2008 National Adkin Alumni Reunion. Joan Bannerman (Class of 1964) introduced the speaker by saying, "He was valedictorian of the Class of 1951, and we know that a valedictorian at Adkin is a valedictorian anywhere." I obtained access to every yearbook from 1951 (the first year one was printed) to 1970 (the last year one was printed), and noted the names of the males and females voted as Most Likely to Succeed. The next group of interest included students who went to Adkin High School, but for some reason did not graduate. Finally, the Sacrificing Pirates are those students who agreed to leave Adkin High School and desegregate Grainger High School, the all-White high school. These students participated in the Freedom of Choice Plan during Adkin High School's final years

of operation. Students who completed three years at Adkin High School and completed their senior year at Kinston High School are also included in this final group of interest. Those students were part of the forced desegregation plan implemented in 1970.

I conducted twenty interviews and convened one focus group. Twelve males and eight females, plus five females in the focus group, provided the oral histories gathered for this study. Their occupations included state, federal, and corporate (management and non-management) employment, homemaker, career military, ministry, and educator. I chose to conduct the focus group made up exclusively of students from the Adkin High School Class of 1952 because of their involvement in the student-led walkout of 1951. Once I confirmed the participation of a member of that class, I asked her to recommend someone else that I could ask to attend. A few days before the focus group was scheduled to take place, I realized that I had contacted more students to attend than my mother's dining room could accommodate. Thankfully, the final number of participants was just enough to fill that table (with me included)!

### Data Collection

Capturing life stories of segregated education and the interconnected relationships of those experiences is the primary focus of this study. Creswell (1998) posits a number of verification procedures worthy of consideration in qualitative research and suggests that the researcher engage in at least two of them. My study used the verification procedures of 1) clarifying researcher bias, 2) member checks, 3) rich, thick description, and 4) triangulation.

In clarifying researcher bias, the researcher acknowledges from the outset the "past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study" (p. 202). I clarified my researcher bias in the opening pages of this

study. I acknowledged my desire to promote racial uplift and educational pride to young Black children; I described my relationships of segregated education; and, I conveyed my sense of urgency that this study be completed for its value to my community and the education community at large. Through member checks, the “researcher solicits informants’ views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations” (p. 202). Member checks were twofold in this study. I asked three participants to read and comment on my findings, and each provided positive responses to the content and overall representation of the relationships of schooling at Adkin High School. I also invited the study participants and others from the Black community in Kinston to attend a presentation on my findings and interpretations. Over forty people attended the presentation, including eight participants. In both instances, this work was found credible. The rich, thick description “allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability because the writer describes in detail the participants or setting under study” (p. 203). I asked someone who did not attend Adkin High School but experienced segregated education to read my findings. This person also attended the presentation on the study findings and interpretations. The feedback I received from this person was that the detailed stories and descriptions allowed them to recall their relationships of segregated education. Finally, triangulation uses “multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (p. 202). I employed triangulation of sources by asking multiple participants the same questions regarding their relationships of schooling, and I sought to corroborate all stories involving the history of Adkin High School and major events at the school through multiple archival documents. For instance, the November 1951 student-led walkout was recalled by several students and verified in the local Kinston newspaper and *Jet* magazine.

Once I identified key members of the Adkin High School Alumni and Friends Association, I contacted them and explained my project to them, why I would like to interview them, and potential risks of participation. I also let them know of my four groups of interest to get names and contact information of potential participants, and with the help of my family I distributed fliers to local churches and organizations. If they were interested in being interviewed, I sent them a copy of the consent form (See Appendix B) and a brief written description of the project (See Appendix D). If they agreed to an interview, then I made arrangements of date, time, and location. The interviews lasted from forty-five minutes to two and one-half hours.

#### Oral History Interviews

Using oral history techniques to interview participants and review any documents they provided relative to their life stories, I collected material vital to recording and archiving the legacy of Adkin High School. Implementing the purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 2002) of snowball sampling, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with participants to capture their perspectives on the roles and relationships of their educational experiences at Adkin High School. Follow-up interviews, in person or by phone, were used to clarify data or extend queries of interest based on data analysis.

I conducted the interviews in the privacy of the participants' homes, with the exception of the focus group at my mother's home in Kinston, one interview in my home in Durham, and one interview in the lobby of a hotel in Kinston.

The oral history interview offers a means to collecting a quantity of information needed to give the data that are potentially rich, dynamic, powerful, while clearly conveying the narrator's meaning/experience. I asked participants to recall experiences of 1) school in

relation to the community, family, and church; 2) coursework, classroom and extracurricular activities, and relationships within the school; and, 3) the overall impression of their high school education. Prior to inquiring about their educational experiences, I asked them to briefly describe their life history. This included their household members and general observations on their upbringing, where they were born, and what elementary and junior high school they attended. If they were born in Kinston, I asked them to identify the community that they lived in. See the Life History Form in Appendix C and interview questions in Appendix E.

### Observation

The Adkin High School National Alumni and Friends Association sponsors events and fundraisers throughout the year. The Class of 1960 and other classes meet on a regular basis, and the National Alumni Officers meet quarterly. I had opportunities to observe former Adkin High School students in a myriad of settings at alumni gatherings and meetings. My role as participant observer varied as the settings I encountered. In large-group environments such as the three-day biennial national alumni event, I mostly observed from my seat. At other times, I would fully participate, as in a meeting sponsored by the Class of 1960 (my father's graduating class), of which I am an honorary member. Patton (2002) describes the approach I utilized as open-ended naturalistic observation, which provides "the opportunity to see what there is to see without the blinders of hypotheses and other preconceptions" (p. 268).

As an honorary daughter of the Class of 1960, I was asked to speak at their class breakfast held during the 2008 national alumni reunion. The breakfast was held at a local banquet hall with approximately 80 people in attendance. Since my father graduated with the

Class of 1960, I had made it my business to connect with many of its members for this research, and some of them I had known most of my life anyway.

For me and my husband, the reunion started outside when our former teacher and my husband's former basketball coach, Coley Little, met us in the parking lot. We exchanged hugs, took pictures, and Mr. Little and I went inside. The hall was decorated in a sea of blue and gold, the school's colors! There were still a lot of empty seats, but as time went by the hall became filled with classmates, family members, and former teachers. I whipped out my camera and captured the faces of most everyone there. Carolyn White, president of the Alumni Class of 1960, is the driving force that keeps the class active and in touch. Lendell Lawson Jones served as mistress of ceremonies. Her father, brother to one of my participants, was the longtime radio announcer of the "Hot Foot" Club which was a weekly radio program featuring music and community announcements.

I spoke for fifteen minutes or so and concluded with an audience-participation exercise. I asked each person to answer on a sheet of paper a series of questions that would help guide my dissertation study. Then I asked if they would be willing to speak with me about their educational experiences at Adkin High School. I asked them to provide their name and contact information if they were willing. I was flattered at the number of positive responses I received from everyone in the room.

I observed the amount of school pride that still permeated this class. Camaraderie and fond memories of the past were evident in the smiles, laughs, and conversations. After breakfast, Horace Wiggins, Jr., another of my Daddy's classmates, came up to me and paid the highest compliment I received that day. He said, "Your Daddy would have been so proud of you today."

Most of the other opportunities to observe former Adkin High School students came from funerals I attended while completing this study. One of the Class of 1952 focus group participants also passed away a month or so after we met. I wanted to attend her funeral, but it was out of town and I had obligations. Since I was in Kinston the day of her homegoing, I went by her classmates' house to see the caravan off as it headed to Jacksonville to honor their own Mary Gray Brown. Again I observed the spirit of family love and concern that manifested itself during all of the limited, but meaningful, events I attended.

### Archival History

I recognized that the archival history of Adkin High was limited, and I found that several documents on education in Kinston failed to mention that Black schools even existed. I used what limited archival data I found to verify dates and events cited in the interviews. I prepared for collecting the life stories by thoroughly researching the major events that shaped the nation and state in the late 1920s through the late 1960s relative to Kinston, the research site, and its place as the county seat of Lenoir County. It was important that I was versed in the social, political, and cultural contexts of Black Kinston during this period and able to reconstruct the landscape of the community. A thorough examination of records captured the history of segregated education in Kinston prior to the opening of Adkin High in 1928. The rich history of North Carolina and its education system is readily available at the North Carolina State Archives and through the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill at the North Carolina Collection, the Center for the Study of the American South, and the Southern Oral History Program. Heritage Place at the Lenoir Community College offers local history works dedicated to Kinston, Lenoir County, and eastern North Carolina. I examined the Kinston Free Press and Lenoir County News archives, along with documents provided by

participants, such as yearbooks, graduation programs, personal mementos, and the alumni edition of the school's newspaper (*The Adkin High Mirror*). I also searched the *Jet Magazine* archives at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Public Library in Washington, DC.

### Data Analysis

Data collection and data analysis performed together can provide focus and direction to a research study, and continual reflection on well-organized data will keep the data manageable (Glesne, 2006). I developed a chronological trajectory to tell the history of Adkin High School within the wider context with the major events impacting the nation, state, and city of Kinston. I maintained an (auto)ethnographic journal, kept fieldnotes, made effective use of the computer, and developed and analyzed my coding schemes through all stages of data analysis. I used the grounded theory-like approach advocated in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw; 1995) throughout the data collection and analysis phases of my research study.

I am a creature of reflection and have been journaling since junior high school. For my research, journaling included reflections on collecting archival data, on reviewing life story documents, and on observing participants during interviews. The initial coding schemes that emerged from my data were broad and reinforced the themes I read about in the literature I reviewed. I fine-tuned these broad themes into detailed subcodes for in-depth analysis of data. After the interviews were transcribed, I read over the transcriptions noting references to school, community, family, and/or church. In several instances, I coded the text in order to reveal the interconnected relationships of the institutions. My comprehensive second analysis involved grouping the previously coded text into subcategories. For instance, references to school were subdivided into categories of principal, teachers, staff,

students, and school description. In the final analysis I was able to group the subdivided categories into broader themes. For example, themes such as characteristics of care and commitment, impressions in the classroom, interactions outside of school, and concern for student's welfare and future emerged from the subcategory of teachers. I analyzed the data through the conceptual framework of school-centered interrelationships among community, family, and church.

The conceptual framework for this study utilized the Bronfenbrenner ecological model to categorize and analyze the stories of relationships. Bronfenbrenner's model provided a tool for organizing these stories within the ecosystems, namely the mesosystem where two or more settings are analyzed. The single setting within the microsystem, such as the school, could not adequately describe the educational experiences of the students because the relationships among the community, family, and church also impacted the school setting. The mesosystem appropriately facilitated examination of the whole nexus of interrelationships. Participants were asked to describe those relationships, and those descriptions were categorized by two or more settings as noted in the Bronfenbrenner model. From those categories, I organized and analyzed the stories by themes. For example, the relationships among the school and the family revealed that families entrusted the school to teach their children and the school expected support from the families in sending students to school prepared to learn. The relationships between the family and the church strengthened those at the school because students were mindful of the moral and spiritual values they were taught and manifested them at school. The Bronfenbrenner ecological model's mesosystem served as an appropriate and useful mechanism for analyzing the interrelationships of school, community, family, and church within this study.

As noted earlier, I developed thick and rich descriptions to give the reader access to the research context. In most cases, the initial readers were the participants, as they engaged in member checking as part of the verification process. Participants were given an audio CD and the transcript of their interview and asked to provide corrections and clarifications and highlight any parts of the text they would wish not to be included in the study.

Patton (2002) presents “voice, perspective, and reflexivity” as a major strategic theme in qualitative inquiry. According to Patton, this theme should be addressed throughout the inquiry process, in particular during the analysis and reporting phases. He posits that all involved (me, my participants, and my audience) are “situated in a sociocultural context (“culture, age, gender, class, social status, education, family political praxis, language, values”) that provide “screens” for differing perspectives” (Glesne, p. 126). I agree with Glesne (2006) that reflexivity is a matter of questioning all aspects of the qualitative process from site selection, interview questions and techniques, data collection and analysis, to findings. For me, reflexivity strengthened my study as I continually recognized and acknowledged my position and bias relative to the positions and biases of my participants and audience.

### Data Management

All interviews, fieldnotes, and appropriate journal entries were transcribed. I used the computer for managing and organizing data. For example, I created spreadsheets as a way to sort data for various uses such as according to role or gender. To the extent possible and deemed necessary, backup files were maintained.

## Summary

Qualitative research is the proper vehicle for exploring the relationships of segregated education at Adkin High School. Historical ethnography combines historical inquiry and ethnography to chronicle the historical perspective and cultural impact of this all-Black High School that no longer exists physically yet remains culturally preserved and embodied in its former students and the Black community in Kinston. This cultural preservation is maintained through the stories of the relationships of their educational experiences. Their educational experiences are all about the relationships.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

For students at Adkin High School, their lives were primarily all about relationships: the relationships among school, community, family, and church, and how they influenced the students' educational experiences and shaped their views of life. Relationships at school included interactions with the principal, teachers, staff, and schoolmates. Relationships involving community, family, and church intertwined within and outside the school walls. In this chapter I reveal the essence of those relationships through the voices of Adkin High School students. Those voices tell stories of the students' struggles and how their responses to unequal treatment led to their eventual triumph.

### The Story of Relationships

A key question that I used to get at relationships was:

What were the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected those attending Adkin High School from 1928-1970?

### Principals and Their Relationships

During its forty-two years of existence, Adkin High had four principals, all men, with C.B. Stewart having the longest tenure. J.T.A. Smith was the school's first principal in 1928, Mr. McElrath followed him, Mr. Stewart came next, and the school moved into desegregation with Golan Frazier at the helm. No participants recall Mr. Smith, but students characterized the other principals in a variety of ways.

McElrath:

Mr. McElrath was a teaching principal. He was principal, but he also taught me algebra. We often referred to him as a Hitler. He was the principal who dealt with

you anytime you got involved in something in the community. He would be right there for anything. But he was a caring man. He was strong in discipline. His name was McElrath, but you know young people name you. We named him...we gave all of them a name. And so we called him Hitler. We referred to him as a Hitler because of the rigidity and firmness of his procedures.

Stewart:

Mr. Stewart I think was a good administrator, but he was very, very strict. I mean I never saw a playful side to him. He was business all the time, which it's not a mark against him, but that's just the way he was. If you were 5 minutes late [principal would discipline you]. And Mr. Stewart was very strict. But that was the rule. If you're not on time, if you were tardy, without a reason, without a legal reason, you were sent back home. He said he had to treat all students the same. If he discovered, if he let me get by, then some other kid would want to get by, so he treated them all the same.

Frazier:

Mr. Frazier appeared at school as a tough jock, and what I mean by that, on his first day he had the whole school, teachers and all, to come to the auditorium. Well, in the auditorium was about 500 students, everybody was in the auditorium. He had the teachers up on the stage with him. Everything was set up. He got up and there was a microphone set up. He got up, and he started to talk in the microphone. After maybe about 10 or 20 words, he stopped and said, "I don't need this," and moved the microphone on the side. Then he took his coat off, his jacket. He rolled up his sleeve, and he loosened his necktie. And he said, "I used to be a boxer." So now he's talking to 500 students in the big auditorium, and things were so quiet, we could hear every word he said. After about 3 months, Mr. Frazier was begging us to work with him, because our initial response was this was our senior year...we were supposed to have fun, and rule...and this was who we got. But after about 3 months, Mr. Frazier was one of our best friends. He still did this jive, but he came to us as a student body, in a socially funny way. We broke him in. Yes we did.

Most of the participants attended Adkin High School under Charles B. Stewart and recall that he was a strict disciplinarian with a no-nonsense attitude. He appears to have been a man of few words but highly capable of leading school staff and students for over two decades. One student summed up Stewart by saying, "He believed in discipline. He had the best teachers he could, and did not tolerate undisciplined or unruly students." Another student noted that he was a "very nice man." However, she admitted:

I was never sent to the office. So I had no direct dealings...back then my memory is that he didn't smile. He was firm. He was serious, and I was one of those people that I didn't like to make waves. So I knew that I didn't want any dealings with Mr. Stewart, so I didn't get in trouble. You know what I'm saying? I was not a trouble maker.

This was the sentiment of most students. They didn't have a direct relationship with the school principal because it was understood that regularly dealing with Mr. Stewart probably meant that you caused more problems at school than other students. However, I sensed that Stewart knew all of his students despite not having a direct relationship with most of them. He was able to identify students with potential to become educators and those who were worthy of being assisted with college scholarships.

I received only a few responses when I asked participants to recall the principals' relationship with community, family, and church. But Waters (2006) reported a fair amount of information on Stewart's accomplishments:

Following his retirement, he administered the Greater Kinston Credit Union and served this organization faithfully until his recent illness. In education circles, he was president of the Coastal Plains District of North Carolina Teachers Association. He was a life member of the National Association of Secondary Principals and was past president of the H.V. Brown School Masters Club.

He was very active in civic endeavors serving as President of the Citizen's Welfare League and the Lenoir County Inter-racial Committee. Mr. Stewart was a 32 degree Mason and a member of Alexander's Consistory. He served as treasurer of the Zeta Eta Lambda Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Being a member of the First Baptist Church, he was Chairman of the deacon board and parliamentarian of the Pan-Hellenic Council.

### Relationships with Students

Principals formed relationships with students in a variety of ways. One student spoke about being an assistant to McElrath and Stewart. He would help them out in the office, use their cars to run errands for them, and assist with the manual ringing of the bells to signal the start of classes. Another student admired Stewart for his willingness to assist her

in going to college. One day Stewart announced that there were college scholarships available and interested students should see him in his office. She went to see the principal to inquire about a scholarship to Shaw University; she was a practicing Baptist and Shaw was the denomination's college affiliate. Stewart informed her that the Shaw University scholarship was taken but the Livingstone College scholarship was still available. She continued the story this way:

Livingstone? Where is Livingstone? And I talked to members of the board at Livingstone, and they said, "Oh, you'll love that school. They've got a basketball team." (laughter) So I kept the scholarship, which was \$150 a year. So I did. I loved Livingstone.

Another student recalled Stewart's efforts to recruit him into the education field by telling the student he was going to be a principal one day. Stewart offered him a scholarship to Elizabeth City Teacher's College after graduation, and he accepted it and spent one summer there working in the school's farm when he expected to have worked on campus washing windows and other duties. He left Elizabeth City, returned to Kinston for a brief period, and left home again to attend North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College. He returned home to teach at Adkin High School and did become a principal some years later.

Although he is remembered as a strict disciplinarian with a business-like demeanor, Mr. Stewart was admired for his concern for student's education and future. On one occasion when a group of males were caught in classroom mischief, Stewart turned the incident into an opportunity to create the Student Betterment Council, composed initially of the same group of young men.

#### Relationships with Community

As noted earlier, most students did not recall any relationships that the principal had with the community. However, one student noted the principals' organization that often met

in one or another of the principals' homes to discuss school-related issues and "to work on their problems that were common to them." He explained that oftentimes school personnel had to have private meetings to discuss issues and they met in the community. He spoke of the organization's mission this way:

This was an organization where principals from throughout the section would come together...where if you had had a problem, you'd tell them how you got around it. And then they would try to meet the needs of the students in the community, and come back to the existing school system, with their own tacit agreements.

#### Relationships with Family

Several Adkin High School students recalled their relationships with Mr. Stewart, from being a student at the school to being the parent of a student at the school. One student-turned-parent said that her relationship with Stewart was different because of "being church members and being adults and having children" while another student-turned-parent remembered Stewart cautioning him against his choice of words when he went before the school board and superintendent to discuss the inequities in educational opportunities for Black students. He recounted:

I know of one particular time I was going to meet with the school board, and the purpose of it was to change some things. And so, I don't know today why he said this to me. He let me know to be careful in my talking. But I still said it. I didn't understand him that way, but I went on and did what I had to do.

#### Relationships with Church

One Adkin High School student was Stewart's church member and remembered that he was active in the leadership of the church. She recalled that he and his wife were "staunch Christians, and they believed in the Bible" and said of their journey to Israel and the Holy Land that "they came back and told it in the church."

## Teachers and Their Relationships

One student looked me squarely in the face and said, “All of them I don’t remember a bad teacher I had.” This statement sums up the sentiments of most of the stories gathered regarding Adkin High School teachers, who are described as caring, concerned, committed, and competent. This outpouring of stories of teachers and their relationships with students confirmed what I learned through the scholarship on segregated education as well as stories I had heard from my relatives and friends. After they had left high school, students recognized the impact that these teachers had had on their lives. One student explained:

I think we had one of the best teaching staffs, the best teachers. We probably didn’t appreciate it as much as we should have at that time. But as we got older, we really had superb teachers who cared about us. They really did care about our progress, and of course if you didn’t do what you were supposed to do, and then the parents cared too, enough to help them out.

One participant noted, “I always reflect upon the atmosphere of commitment that our teachers had for us. They were really committed to helping us succeed.” The care and commitment of teachers are essential for students to receive a quality education and gain positive educational experiences.

Caring and committed teachers go above and beyond their classrooms to ensure that students’ overall welfare is taken into consideration. It is worth repeating what one student said: “They didn’t necessarily let the school day end at the bell ringing.” Teachers intervened when they saw students with potential going astray, and teachers did not hesitate to remind students that anything less than their best was unacceptable. Another student explained:

But you felt that your teachers were always thinking about more than just your subject matter. You know, they would call you out if they heard about your behavior. If they heard that you were on the right track, and they would definitely get involved if they thought you were on the wrong track. And they could do anything to correct

it. When we traveled with the band, when we traveled in the region, they would let you know about how to behave when you went other places. And as you prepared to go to school, to go to college, they would tell you about connections that they had where you were planning to go.

Students recalled how they admired the academic achievements of their teachers and the competence they possessed in their disciplines. One student remembered how he would look through the yearbook and note the colleges they had attended and the fact that “most of them had gone to out of state in New York, NYU, or some of the other out-of-state universities for their master’s.” He said, “There were no graduate studies in North Carolina at that time, I believe.” Another student was eager to point out that several of their teachers went on to become principals and school leaders. She continued with the list.

Mr. Lawson, he became the Principal at Dobbs. Mr. Carraway became Principal at Woodington. Mr. Lucas left and he became Principal at Mary Potter and then later at Hillside High School, along with Mrs. Lucas, his wife, she was the head of the English department there. And Mr. Barfield had left and gone to California. He recruited people from the South to go out there to teach.

Teachers were highly respected in the Black community during segregated education, and it was not uncommon for teachers to double as leaders in the community. For instance, several educators in Kinston were charter members of the city’s first Black-owned credit union. The first fifty members recognized as the founders of the Greater Kinston Credit Union included mostly teachers.

As stalwarts of the community, teachers were given opportunities to speak before congregations on the importance of education or any other issues that needed to be addressed. In some cases, teachers also taught Sunday School at the churches they belonged to and of course reinforced the Sunday School lesson with lessons learned at school.

## Relationships with Students

Adkin High School students described the various relationships they had with teachers. Students recalled lasting impressions of teachers in the classroom, the concern teachers had for students' welfare and futures, and interactions with teachers outside of school.

Students recalled teachers who encouraged them to participate in activities like the Debate Team, recruited them to become charter members of the Hi-Y club, which required "good moral standing and good qualifications" to join, and believed in their abilities to be excellent students. Others spoke of teachers who took the time to teach manners, made students feel special by giving them "a little extra attention," and one student declared, "they taught us square dance and they taught us all kinds of dances because even though things were segregated, they said, 'One day we all will be working together, so we need to know about other cultures'."

There is a long list of teachers whom students fondly recall. Two teachers are particularly noteworthy and left indelible impressions on students over the years. A mere mention of the names Miss Sarah Ethel Wooten and Mrs. Mable Lenhardt evoked stories indicative of the care, concern, commitment, and competence that teachers of the segregated education era are remembered for.

Miss Sarah Ethel Wooten was described as a "big strong woman with broad shoulders." One student noted that she was "very strict in the use of grammar. Yes, very strict. As a matter of fact, she had a grammar club." Different students offered different estimates of what the grammar club cost. One said a penny and another said five cents; nonetheless, "there was a big jar at Sarah Ethel Wooten's desk, and if we made a mistake we

put money in the jar.” One student noted, “And she had us so that we would correct each other even on the ground when we were out playing at our recess time. If you heard somebody using bad grammar, you reported them when you went back in there.” Her stature and strength served her well when needed. One student recalled this about her and a student whom she had overheard using profanity:

She heard him say an ugly word, and when he realized she heard him, he dashed into the bathroom, the boys’ bathroom, and she went in there and got him and brought him out. And she kept a bar of soap in her desk drawer, and if you said an ugly word, or used profanity or vulgar language, she’d literally put soap in your mouth, and say, “Now go wash your mouth.” It worked. We’re talking about a grown-sized boy...and she would go in there and be cornering you right in the bathroom. You go in there, and she’d go right in there and get you.

Mrs. Lenhardt was described as a petite lady with a soft but stern voice. She also taught English, and students credit her for teaching them “the English background that we needed to function out of high school.” She is remembered as “a real professional in developing the best of young people” and for her leadership over the drama productions at the school. One student recalled what he thought was her greatest lesson:

By the time we got to our senior year, Mrs. Lenhardt taught us how your language and how you present yourself determines how people react to you when you go out to school. It determined how freshmen watched you, and I’ll never forget, that the way that she calmed us down, she would whisper one word, “Seniors,” and when we were misbehaving, she would say, “Seniors, seniors.” And the message was “I thought you said that you were seniors. Why are you behaving so childishly?” I’ll never forget that word...she said, “Seniors.”

Another student recalled the same demeanor. He said, “She never had to raise her voice. You knew what you had to do to get the work done.” He told the story of attending her funeral services and noting the principal’s remarks that “Mrs. Lenhardt was a person that even the thugs would tiptoe past her classroom. That was just the way she carried herself.”

According to the students, teachers were not concerned only about a student's grades and ability to complete assignments. Teachers were also concerned about students' welfare and futures. One student credits Mrs. Lenhardt for steering him into being a physical education teacher, while another honors Harold Fleming for convincing her to channel her leadership skills in a positive way. She said, "I think I owe everything to Mr. Fleming, and he was so instrumental in turning me around." Finally, another student recalled a teacher's concern for her health and how the teacher was aware of her family's situation.

My senior year, I fractured my femur bone playing basketball. And I'll never forget what he [Stephen Carraway] said to me before school closed. He said, "Now you know your parents are not able to take care of that injury, so before school is out, you make sure you go back to the doctor, because insurance is still covering you." And I appreciated him telling me that, because I hadn't thought about that, and I knew my parents hadn't.

Teachers interacted with students outside the classroom. Some teachers were coaches and volunteers at the recreation department, while others spent time with students and talked with them about things outside school. One student recalled attending the wedding of one of her teachers, and another student remembered driving for some teachers and running errands for others. He recounted a fond memory of his interaction with a teacher outside school:

At that time Mr. Lawson didn't have a car. When he bought a car, he couldn't even drive it. And I did the driving. When they were getting married I took Bonnie to get her wedding dress made, cakes and the invitations printed and all. He would get me out of the classroom and give me his car keys. He had learned to drive by this time, and had a blue 1947 Plymouth. But I did more getting ready for his wedding than he did, because he was in the classroom.

Admittedly, some students did have unfavorable stories of their relationships with teachers. One female student talked about a heated exchange with her algebra teacher when he accused her of not working on a difficult mathematics problem that she had stayed up all night to work on. She proclaimed that he was upset because "he talked about that problem,

and he couldn't work it, but I worked it." Another female student talked about being afraid of a teacher who always intimidated her when she came to school late because she often had to run to the store for her mother before coming to school. Another student spoke of witnessing the favoritism that some teachers showed, and this soured him to think that "some were very unfair, that I thought that should have been teaching rather than attending to certain little petty, childhood mess, you know." Yet another student simply stated, "I didn't like her. I never liked her."

During segregation, it was commonplace for school personnel to recruit students to return home to teach after they earned a college degree. Some chose to become teachers while others did not. One student who came back explained that "he received a warm reception" on his return and "was happy to come back because I knew what the shortcomings were at the school, and I knew what the students needed." He considered himself a hands-on teacher and expected students to "do my work" and when "a student gave me trouble, on the way from the school I'd go to the house. And the parents were real cooperative." His interactions with students went beyond the classroom.

I've taken children and gone out and harvested crops. You asked about raising money. Well, you still had to raise money, so I've taken children to go out and picked up potatoes on farms, and taken the money and given it to the school. I've got children that I took some down after I worked at the Marine base. When they graduated, I took them down there and got them jobs. And I took them on my own car down there and got them jobs working. And your dad, when your dad was an adult, I took him to get his first car he bought. I took your dad to Washington, DC, where he bought his first car he ever owned. I took him to get it. So that's the type of relationship I mean when I said that I was working with students. So I worked, and I taught social studies, and I actually tried to make the social studies the living social studies.

One student who did not return to teach recalled that her former science teacher came to her house before her college commencement to let her know that there was an opening in

the science department. She commented that she knew she wasn't going into education because she got to college and "decided that if I didn't take any education, then I couldn't fall back on it." Another student who was recruited to return to the classroom by his former teacher who was now a principal decided to forgo teaching and became one of the first Black postal workers in Kinston. He remarked, "In the meantime, I took the postal exam. And the Post Office opened up to me, and the post office was paying master's degree money then."

#### Relationships with Community

When asked about relationships between teachers and the community, one student talked about teachers relative to ministers. He said, "Teachers were highly respected in the neighborhood. They did more than the ministers." He went on to say that most ministers did not live in the community and churches didn't meet every Sunday. Another student noted how teachers were engaged in the community and sought assistance from the business community. He remembered:

Mr. Grice formed the credit union. And Mr. Barfield, they were trying to do everything they could. He interacted with Dupont, tried to obtain a refrigerator for our physics class. If you could get a refrigerator or air conditioning unit during our physics class that would be beneficial. We had nothing. They went out to businesses and tried to obtain equipment.

#### Relationships with Family

Teachers visited families for a variety of reasons, and one student noted, "It wasn't unusual for a teacher to come to your house. And they didn't always come because of problems. They'd just come." In many cases relationships between teachers and families centered on the understanding that children "behaved" in school and got their work done so that a visit from the teacher was to be avoided. Another student said, "Back in the day, if the

teacher sent home a note, you better carry it home. And if you got a bad report, you got punishment from your teacher and then when you got home, you got another one.”

Teachers sometimes visited students when they were ill or someone in their family had died, and that left positive impressions on students and their families. One student noted that teacher-family relationships sometimes manifested themselves in church. She recalled:

The teachers in the school did not have to make home visitations. They went to church, and that’s when the teachers saw our parents and gave them the report and what have you. The teachers were so concerned about our welfare. I acted ugly in a biology class. I didn’t do anything but blow up a balloon and the thing came up, and the teacher didn’t write me up and do all these things. The teacher just walked back to my table. He said, “I’ll see mother at church Sunday,” and walked back. And that Sunday morning at church, when he went around to pay his little offering or what have you, he beckoned for us to come out. And the show was on!

Some of those relationships extended beyond school matters. One rural student said, “Yeah, teachers often visited with us. They would come out to see us. And especially during spring and summer when there was produce out there. My mom and dad would give them something.” Another student recalled the relationship between a teacher and his family that helped to catapult his brother to stardom.

I can remember as a kid Miss Perry was the music director for my brother. She had played in big bands in the ‘30s and ‘40s and so she came out and taught music in Kinston and my brother was talented. She was able to convince my parents to allow him to play in a band that she was forming at that particular time. So that was the beginning of his career. It just shows how the influence of your teachers can play a real important part in the success of you as an individual.

And one student flatly declared, “I just had parents that believed whatever the teacher said.”

#### Community Involvement and School as the Center of Community Culture

The community supported the school at large through fundraising activities and by attending events at the school and throughout the community. The notion of “separate but

equal” was just that – a notion, and the community stepped in to raise funds for things that the school needed. Local authorities did not provide resources for items that would enhance the school’s appearance. This is where the community stepped in.

Students spoke of the community’s raising funds to buy stage curtains for the auditorium, shrubbery for the school grounds, and even “to help for the bus to purchase gas for us to travel throughout Eastern North Carolina.” The community participated in fundraising events like the Popularity Contest and they supported students who sold candy, “little pies,” and other items to raise money for the school. One student acknowledged, “So the community participated in the annual event raising money every year. A lot of times communities donated things in kind to the school.”

The community supported school activities by attending programs and concerts as well as sporting events. They supported academic programs and other events honoring students’ accomplishments. The pride of the community was the Adkin High School Marching Band, which they supported wholeheartedly. To this day, stories abound about the Adkin Pirates’ marching down Queen Street during the Christmas parade and winning the admiration of judges and both Black and White spectators. One student described it this way:

Sure. They would come out. That was the only outlet that men of the families would come to. Even when we had [programs] (laughs) they would come there during the holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving and stuff like that. Then they would have a parade, and the outlet there would be for the Blacks at that time would be on Tower Hill Road, come up Washington Street, and come back to Adkin High School. It [parade] would be short there on Queen Street, from Blount Street, up to Washington Street and then back to the school. During the time of the football season. Oh, Lord, yes. That was a great outing for them. And sometimes you would see some of the parents come out and march along with the band. I will never forget that. And then one particular parade there on Tower Hill Road, the soldiers from Ft. Bragg would come up and march, which was beautiful to us, exciting to me anyway. I can’t remember him, but one of the students was killed. He got in the way of a truck or

something and he was killed right there on Tower Hill Road. Tower Hill and Clay as I remember.

Community involvement reached beyond the tangibles of fundraising and attending school events to touch the lives of Adkin High School students. The community was there to encourage and support them. Neighbors were more than just people who lived next door or around the corner. They got involved when they saw children misbehaving, and they were positive influences on children, who garnered their respect for a job well done. Students appreciated the kindness and generosity of community members. Sometimes a kind gesture was simply providing a ride home or an opportunity to share the experience of a lifetime, like reporting back to a local civic organization about meeting Thurgood Marshall. When one student needed extensive dental work, the community dentist offered his services free of charge.

Black students from Lenoir County were not provided transportation to Adkin High School. Since it was the only high school in the county for Blacks until 1951, county students either found their own way to school each day or boarded with community members during the school week. It was not uncommon for rural students to board with city families during the week to attend school and go home for the weekends. One student explained how his father would drop him off Monday mornings and return for him on Friday evenings. When asked how he was treated by the family and how his family compensated for his stay, he replied:

They cared for me like I was their child. I ate with the family. She treated me like a member of their family. She fixed my breakfast. They [his parents] compensated them with something, like we lived in the country and they would bring them stuff.

The intangible community support included encouragement and leadership. One student told of being held in high esteem by the adults in his community because of his

trustworthiness and integrity. He often wondered about the compliments other young males in the community received like “tall and handsome,” “short and cute,” “had curly hair,” or “pretty teeth,” until looking back he realized that their compliment to him was “they trusted their sons and their daughters to go with me, and they would often say to their son, ‘Why don’t you act like him?’” Another student spoke of the intangible support she received from the community:

I think it started when the lady across the street would sit at her window and tell her grandchildren when I walked out my front door each morning, “Look at that girl. She’s going to be a teacher when she grows up. Look how she’s carrying her books.” And when they reported to me what she said, that had a great influence on how I did carry my books, and how I studied my books.

Another form of community support was the leadership provided by its members. A student recalled the number of teachers and school leaders who lived in her neighborhood and how she “had to kind of be a pretty nice, respectable girl at that time, because they sort of controlled the community.” Other students spoke of having to remember that their actions reflected their neighborhoods, and they were always reminded that they represented their families and communities in whatever they did.

Students who left Adkin High School to desegregate the all-White high school knew that they were representing their families and communities as well. There was mixed support from the community during the mid-1960s Freedom of Choice era. One student from that era recalled:

There were just as many people who were against it in the Black community, there were just as many for, on my side. To tell you the truth...I don’t know how many it would be that were against me, but there were some people who did think...they just bought into what the Caucasian people were saying, but the majority of the people I would say were rooting for me all the time.

This student, who transferred from Adkin High School to Grainger High School, also recalled some discouragement from the community during this time. She said, “And even the people in the Black community, many of them felt that I was better than them. That’s just what they said. They said, ‘You think you’re smart. You think you’re so smart if you go to Grainger.’”

Another student who attended Adkin High School during the heart of the Jim Crow era thought that the community leaders could have done more in the fight against White supremacy and racism. She noted:

But then our Black leaders would not stand up against the White people in charge, and therefore we had to suffer a lot of things that we shouldn’t have had to suffer, that they won’t suffer today, because somebody will speak out.

The school was the center of community culture during segregation and was used by community organizations for a variety of events that often included students. It must be noted that using the school’s facilities was necessary because access to White public facilities for Blacks in the rural south was not widespread at that time. The school was the center of community culture because it was one of the few places for Blacks to gather socially. The Adkin High School auditorium, built in 1928, was the only facility of its kind for Blacks in Kinston and Lenoir County until the Sampson School auditorium was built in 1947. The community used the auditorium for nonschool activities hosted by churches, civic organizations, fraternities, and sororities that included gospel concerts, debutante balls, magic shows, and visits from well-known people. One student recounted:

Now in Kinston also, and you talk about community, there were so many community organizations, that these community organizations had certain activities, because Mary McCloud Bethune came to speak at Adkin High School our senior year. Yes, she did. And there were so many people who came, and I will never forget her face, that Sunday with her black dress on and her rhinestone buttons, I remember. And I’ll never forget it.

Another student recalled, “the school was, in the Black community, the facility for major events.” His dad was one of the fraternity organizers who hosted the annual Omega Psi Phi Talent Hunt. He noted that each year students would compete at this “big event on a Sunday afternoon” and “people would dress up” for it. He pointed out that events like those, occurring today, would probably take place at a hotel ballroom or other facility, but he added:

Back then the events were either held in the school cafeterias or the auditorium. So the schools were the center for events for the African-American community. I don’t remember going to a Holiday Inn in town, and I don’t remember going to any major event at a public place. They were all held at the school.

Black Kinston was one of the earliest communities in eastern North Carolina to have modern recreational facilities that included a public swimming pool and tennis courts. Black residents from surrounding towns often sponsored bus trips to swim at Holloway Center. Mr. David Lenhardt is credited with leading efforts to provide athletic and related activities to children and the community at large. He led community efforts to get children involved in recreation to learn basic athletic and teambuilding skills and adults in the community involved as volunteer coaches and mentors. The community recreation department bridged the relationship between school and community through athletics. Although students competed against each other in neighborhood teams during recreation play, they became one team as Adkin High School Pirates when they competed against other high schools.

Several students noted the importance of the community’s recreation department relative to their schooling. One student remembered how Mr. Lenhardt brought programs like Little League football, basketball, and baseball to the community so that “by the time they got to high school, they had honed their skills relatively well, and all Mr. Grice had to

do was just take it up a notch.” Another student likened his community recreation experience to a country club membership and reminisced about the Holloway Center swim team:

You know they had all kinds of athletic events at the Recreation Center, so a lot of the school personnel were either coaches or volunteers. You know, I was involved in the swimming team out at Holloway. The coaches were normally college students. The coaches were like Fred Jones, who lives here in Durham now. He was my first coach. Later on, when I became a college student, I coached the team. And Mr. Coefield, he worked at the Center. Mr. Lenhardt, he had all the baseball, basketball leagues. In a way, when you think about tennis, basketball, sports, it was like being a member of a country club without having any fees. You know, and if you signed up for a team, the uniforms were provided by the city, and you could go down to play tennis, whether you had a personal racket or not. You could check out one. So it’s things that we don’t even realize now.

Even the students who attended Grainger High School and did not fully participate in school events and athletics found that access to the community recreation department played a role in their lives. One student remembered, “I didn’t do anything at Grainger, but I did do a lot at Holloway. I played softball. And I would go out to dances at Holloway Center, because it was right across the street, they [parents] would let me do that.” While another student said:

I mean I’d always played sports growing up, but not for school, because the Catholic school did not have any but I did the city league. I did swimming. I swam...we did state champion swimming. I was state champion in several strokes. Absolutely I was a Holloway Shark. One since 1958 I think it was. I was maybe 8 years old or something when I joined the team, and I stayed on it until I went to high school. Every summer I was there.

### Families and Their Relationships

Families supported the school through PTA attendance and by sending their children to school prepared to learn. It would certainly have been the PTA that worked with the school once it was determined which items were needed as a result of the school’s budget shortfall. Families and parents attended PTA meetings to find out how students were progressing at school. I can imagine that parents would be anxious to know if their child was

not doing his or her best because families valued education. They recognized the importance of education as a means for getting ahead, achieving more than they had, and gaining access to opportunities only afforded by education. Family support extended outside of the home to other students in the community who needed a helping hand or encouragement.

Most parents supported and attended PTA meetings. One Adkin High School student who later became an Adkin High School parent held a leadership role in the organization. She described her memories of attending PTA meetings with her mother, how they walked together to the meetings, and their desire “to keep up with what was going on in the schools.” She continued to describe her leadership role in the PTA when she became a parent and noted that she walked to the meetings then, too. She described the PTA’s purpose in the following way:

We met to confirm with the parents what the school was all about, what the children were asked to do, and what the children were doing or were not doing. And it was trying to affiliate the parents with the work ethic of the school, where their children were concerned, because if your children go and they’re not learning anything, or they’re not participating in anything, you know, then you are concerned about them, because we sent them there to learn. And they would always have the PTAs to inform the parents...and especially if a parent had a child that was falling way behind.

Not all parents participated in PTA activities, yet one student whose parents did not participate remembered the support his mother provided for her children by making sure they had a hot breakfast every morning and she “took care of washing our clothes and motivating us.” He noted further that family support for him extended through his siblings, who did not go to college like he did but when he “got ready to go off to college had a Samsonite luggage, an electric razor, a Remington typewriter, and my first suit was purchased from my sisters and brother.” Students from large families often spoke about the support provided by siblings who had left home. This student proudly explained:

With the help of our sisters, that's what made us have a good year, because we were able to dress, and they kept us up with the fashions and the styles and everything, and then my sisters told us as long as we did good in school, we got good grades on our report cards, and all this stuff, that they would just be right there for us, and they were, all three of them.

Family interactions with the school caused varying levels of tension. In this case, a mother's first visit to the school was motivated by concern for the welfare of a child who didn't come home until hours after school closed. As the story is told, a group of students earlier that day had laughed at the teacher's remark that they had dog funerals in the "little hick town in North Carolina" where she was from. The teacher was not amused and kept the girls after school for three hours requiring them to say, "Ha, ha, ha, ha!" the entire time. The student recalls that her mother became frantic when she didn't come home from school right away and was equally not amused to find that she had walked to the school to find out what the reason was her daughter hadn't returned. This student remembered that her mother "blessed" the teacher out, but in time her mother and teacher came to appreciate one another. She never laughed in that class again.

Then a few years later her mother had to return to school to plea for her son to be admitted back to class during the last weeks of his senior year after he was suspended for leaving campus to purchase a gift for a teacher. Their mother successfully pled his case, and he was readmitted to school and graduated.

Students understood the consequences of parents' being summoned to school, as one student recalled:

For a parent to have to come to the school, you had a major indictment against you, because most parents had to work, and when the teacher told the student you had to bring in your parent, you were in deep trouble, because it meant they were going to lose time from work, and very seldom did they do that.

Several students talked about the value their families placed on education and the sacrifices made on their behalves so that they could complete high school. One student explained how her mother moved them from another county to Kinston so that she and her brother could attend Adkin High School. She said, speaking of her mother, “She was able to bring us here and put us in school and let nothing stop her.” Another student recalled his mother’s willingness to do her sons’ chores with their father so that they could attend Adkin High School. He explained:

But mother worked, helped her children. Mom worked many times on the farm so we could go to school. Dad would say, you know, “I need these boys to stay home and help me build this fence today, and cut wood or what have you,” and Mama would say, “No the boys are going to school, and I’ll help you do whatever you need to do today. But the boys need to go to school.”

Parents and families had expectations that their children would know how to behave. One student remembered his father’s words, “Remember who you are, and whose you are,” which assured him that he “had to be on my best behavior at all times, because if for any reason somebody told him that they saw me misbehaving, I had to pay a penalty some kind of way.” For some students those expectations meant being prepared to go to college. When a student was asked to explain what he meant by “he knew he was going to college,” he responded:

I say that, because early on, I guess when Mama told me real early that I was going to college. Then I saw my brother, 7 years older than I was, he went on to college. So I knew I wasn’t going to stay around here. We went to visit probably North Carolina College before my brother went to college. I was about 9 years old, and to see the game, it just let you know this is what you wanted to do. This was really what you wanted to do. I never had any ideas about boarding, where I wanted to go to college, but I just said here I’m going to go to college. And just go from there. It was not an option.

Family support included concern for the welfare of their children’s classmates, and it was not uncommon for parents and school staff to work together for the overall success of all

children in the community. One student remembered how school personnel and parents worked together to make sure that students who needed help when going on a trip were offered assistance or students who were not maximizing their abilities were mentored to help them succeed. Another student recalled his family's contribution to the community by allowing neighborhood children to use books from his family's resources. Kinston's first Black library had opened only a few years prior to his starting high school, and it was located on the other side of town for these students. He explained:

And I guess I was one of the only ones or the few of the ones in Lincoln City that had encyclopedias. My daddy bought books for us, and nearly all of the children in the neighborhood would come to our house to use our encyclopedias. I'm not saying that boastfully, but the difference is that we had parents who cared about the future of the education. My daddy was a teacher, too, so we had a library in our house. We had a room set aside that we called 'the library,' and in the library we had the World Book Encyclopedia or whatever encyclopedia that existed at that time. We had reference books, almanacs, and things of that type. So frequently when they would give us an assignment, we could get it at home, without having to go outside. And frequently many of the children in the neighborhood would come to our house and do their homework also.

### Church Relationships

Interactions between the school and the church were limited. There were Christian-based school organizations like the Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y that over the years converted to resemble a fraternity or sorority. Despite any direct relationship with the school, church participation by students influenced their educational experiences. For some students the church gave them leadership opportunities that enhanced their leadership roles at school, and for others the church instilled values of respect for self and others. The church was an extension of the family and community that reinforced the school's belief that doing your best was always expected.

## Relationship with school

While most students did not recall numerous instances of direct relationships between the school and their church, one student remembered the significance of the Tri-Hi-Y Club at school, which “taught a lot of what we needed to do in the field of religion and things of that nature, and how to be trustworthy and truthful, how to be decent young ladies, how to refrain from, you know, moral disgrace.” Another student noted the church’s relationship with the school in terms of the school’s soliciting funds from the church. He said, “Whereas the high school would solicit funds in order to put on a program or the high school needed financial donations to put on programs. Yes, then Antioch did send a donation.” He also noted, “And Antioch itself supported me with scholarship funds when I went off to school.”

## Student Participation

Students recalled their participation in church activities, and most agreed that “we always had programs – Easter program, Christmas program, Mother’s Day program – whatever thing came up on the calendar, we always had a bunch of children and we had programs related to whatever day it was.” Most of the students remembered how their church participation enriched their education. Several students held leadership positions in the church and taught Sunday School, too. One student said it caused him to “have to study the scripture along with the textbooks.” Another student noted that her uncle was superintendent of the Sunday School and the teachers there were just like her teachers in school. She said, “The teachers there encouraged you, they supported you, and made sure we went on picnics and activities that you could enjoy. And they taught you to read, too.”

Students recalled church services that involved them as leaders in all aspects of the worship service. They called it Junior Church, and the youth would sing in the choir, serve

as ushers and stewards, and assume all the roles that day except preaching. These activities and others in the church caused one student to explain how that helped in later years:

I remember I was a steward and we came up and counted the money...but we were learning the adult roles. And then every Easter and Christmas you had a play. And from the time you were pre-school through high school, everybody had a part, no matter how big or small. So in effect, everybody was being taught how to be a public speaker.

Most students commented on the importance of church for teaching them “spiritual values” and “being taught right from wrong, being taught how to live by the golden rule. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Students talked about how much they enjoyed going to church and Sunday School. They also understood that if they didn’t attend a church service on Sunday then they were limited to doing anything else the rest of the day, but one student said, “Church was just like an extension of your contacts at school, because my friends at church were like my friends at school.”

Some students fondly remembered the interconnected support of family, community, and church. They recalled that family members or neighbors would go through the neighborhood gathering students to go to church and Sunday School. During this time, people went to two Sunday Schools each Sunday – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. One student said, “My next-door neighbor was the one who took the kids to St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church, and she’d get the whole crew ready, and we would set off down the railroad.” Another student remembered, “My aunt would come through the neighborhood and pick up all the students, all the kids in the neighborhood, and of course we walked to St. John.”

## Teacher Participation

Teachers were highly respected in the Black community during segregation. “Back in those days, especially at quarterly meetings, you could expect people from everywhere, and that’s when people of status would show up.” When asked about seeing teachers at his church, the student replied that teachers who visited his church were recognized and often given an opportunity to address the congregation. He recalled:

It was kind of expected that teachers would visit churches, and when they came to Vine Swamp, they were treated with royalty. Normally, if a teacher came, they were given a seat...you know the church would be built with a deacons’ stand, and they would be given a seat up there, and be recognized, and they would have a moment to address the congregation and that kind of thing. They would talk about what kind of needs we had at school. What the parents could be helpful in doing. They would talk about any problems that they had.

When I asked if they talked about the importance of education and making sure people sent their children to school, he said, “Oh, yeah, yes, yes. Sure.” He continued:

Personal hygiene, they would tell stuff about that. You know some of the kids, maybe they were doing the best they could, to come in the classroom with dirty clothes and all and hair unruly, matter in their eyes. That’s what they were talking about, the importance of making them get up early enough so that they could fix themselves up, and not just jump up out of the bed and run to school.

I asked another student about the number of teachers who were members of his church. He noted that the Freewill Baptist church was not as well known as other Black religious denominations, so most teachers joined other affiliations, like Missionary Baptist, Presbyterian, or African Methodist Episcopal (AME). He explained:

See, most teachers when they came in, they were affiliated with whatever church they had been to at home, because if they were AME they would go to an AME church, and most of the teachers who came in from outside, they didn’t know anything about the Free Will Baptist church, so then they had to decide what church they would go to. And so that was another strong force now. Teachers participated in the church activities.

The relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected Adkin High School students included interactions within the school and off the school grounds. Stories of relationships between students and Principal Stewart are limited, but he is fondly remembered as a man of upstanding character and business-like demeanor. Few students recall relationships among the principal, community, family, and church; nonetheless, records show that Stewart was active in educational, civic, and religious organizations. Most students recall fond interactions with teachers who were regarded as being caring, concerned, committed, and competent. Teachers were highly respected within the Black community in Kinston, and they were noted for their participation in church and community affairs. The community provided tangible and intangible support for the school and its students. The school served as a center of community culture in providing access to its facilities for various events, with the community recreation department strengthening relationships between students and the community. Families supported the PTA and maintained expectations of their children learning from teachers they trusted to have their children's best interests in mind. Student relationships at church intertwined with school as they developed leadership skills and spiritual values, and families interacted with teachers at church. For these students, the relationships of schooling extended throughout the community, family, and church.

My second research question, "How did these relationships influence the educational experiences of Adkin High School students?", explains how the relationships described above impacted students' educational experiences. Within the stories they told me are the interconnected relationships among school, community, family, and church that remain in students' memories decades later.

The relationships among the school, community, family, and church influenced the educational experiences of Adkin High School students in numerous ways. Students recalled stories of interactions with teachers and classmates, contributions from the community, unconditional love and support from family, and the church's spiritual connection to education's relationships that impacted their lives then and now. Students articulated how they thought these relationships interconnected to shape and transform them into who they are today.

First and foremost, the relationships that students had with caring and committed teachers influenced their educational experiences in school and their lives as adults. Students credit teachers with stepping in and offering words of admonishment that turned their negative behavior into positive leadership abilities. One student recalled a teacher that helped him hone his debating skills, which even today help him in his ministry by "being able to stand before a crowd and try to get an idea over to them." Teachers encouraged students to do their best and to strive for excellence in all that they did. Another student said:

There was so much concern. And now that I think about it, I think they didn't make any money. And some of the people at the tobacco factory were almost making as much as they were making. But they really encouraged us to do our best.

A student recalled an assignment from his senior year social studies class that intrigued him and influenced his future work in education:

I did a paper my senior year on dropouts. We started out with 120 some students... Yes, and we graduated 88. And in that paper, I looked at the reasons to why they dropped out. Some of them were pregnant, some people had repeated grades, some people had moved on. Ironically, when I became a professional in Washington, DC, working in education, I did a report of DC very similar to that and it afforded me the opportunity to get some grant money to do something with the kids up there. So the foundation was laid, and Mr. Lawson had a very important impact upon that by the fact that I did that report for him.

The relationships with fellow students at school were influential, too. Students reminisced about walking to school with friends, playing sports, and working on school projects together. One student explained, “My fondest memories of Adkin High School was my relationship with my classmates. We were able to fellowship with one another and build a bond that has lasted down through the years.”

Relationships within the community supported the school and its students. Students fondly recalled the community support through financial means and by attending all types of school events – academic, athletics, and the arts. Students noted how much it meant for them to see community members at school who encouraged them to do their best and applauded their successes. One student noted that there was always “a full house at Baccalaureate and the graduation, and the community claimed you.” The community members were concerned with the overall well-being of students and oftentimes did not hesitate to get involved.

Another student said, “Our neighbors looked out for our grades.” She continued:

All of the neighbors, all of the teachers, they were just so concerned. It takes the whole community, it takes everybody to raise a successful person to be successful. And we had the support of your mama, your family, this family, the other family. And if they said something to you, it was as if your parents were speaking because they were concerned. So it was a very close-knit unit.

Family relationships offered love and support for students that motivated them to want to do their best, and doing their best was expected by their families. In most cases, students were influenced by their families’ desire for them to have a better life and become productive citizens. For some, college was the only option set forth by their parents. For others, the dream of college was an elusive thought because of the family’s financial position. In either case, the family’s expectations that students would do their best was unwavering. Family support of the school and teachers made students understand the

importance of education to their families and also understand that parents were not tolerant of misbehavior and half-done efforts to complete assignments. One student explained:

There's an old saying about it takes a community or a village to raise a child. It doesn't have very much meaning right now, but when we were growing up, it had a lot of meaning. And you could not go any place and do anything that you shouldn't be doing without it getting back home first before you did. And that went with the teachers too. Because if you didn't do what you were supposed to do in school, it got home before you could get home.

The influence of the church on the educational experiences of Adkin High School students centered on their participation in church activities. Skills learned at school and church were interchangeable. Leadership roles at church fostered their ability to become effective school leaders. Several students recalled that the church was where they learned to speak in front of audiences, and this served them well at school and in their adult lives. Most students admitted that going to church was not an option, but one student explained it this way:

When we went to Sunday School and church, it was a pride, it was an enjoyment. We wanted to go. We were not forced, per se. We had to go, but at a point it became you wanted to go.

The important influence of the church for the students was how it grounded their spiritual lives. One student who became a minister summed up the influence of the school, family, and the church on his life. He explained:

All the background for ministry came as a part of all the debating, being able to stand before a crowd and try to get an idea over to them. That came from the debating team. The moral side of it I suppose came from home, what I was taught at home. The religious side was the church, and all of that became a part of who I am.

### Summary

Students offered profound observations when asked to expound on their thoughts concerning the relationships among school, community, family and church. They understood the importance of the relationships among them all, and offered a myriad of ideas. One

student said, “If you go with the home, the church, and the community and the school, it should be like one.” Another student noted, “It was school, and home, and everybody networking together. And everybody supporting everybody. And that was one thing that I loved about Adkin.” It was this student who wove the idea of these interconnected relationships into a single thought when she described this in the following way:

Now the school, Adkin High School, was like a productive cooperation within the community, because it provided activities for the children, which caused the parents to be able to come out and inquire about their schooling and the function of the school, and the togetherness of the school. Back in the day, the parents worked with the instructors. The parents really worked, and they would help in any way they could to see that that child or their children obeyed the school and the principal. The church was the same, because you put on your pageantry and Christmas program, and so you still did the same thing in church in a sense as you did in school.

Finally, students took pride in Adkin High School. Years after leaving the school, one student noted, “Well, basically I enjoyed school, and so it was an enjoyable day.”

Another student recalled, “I think all of it was great.” And another student explained, “I’d say just like it made us proud to be part of Adkin.” Students took pride in themselves and wanted to represent the school well. A student in the marching band recalled:

Adkin had a reputation for winning the Christmas Parade against all the other schools, Black or White. So we took pride in band practice, because we knew that at the end of the year they were going to have a Christmas Parade and they were going to rate the bands, and we wanted to win.

This school pride went beyond the classroom, and the school’s influence fostered lessons for a lifetime. One student summarized, “...so basically we went to school not only for an education, but for socialization, and to be taught life. You know, that school, Adkin, was our teacher. It taught us a lot of things in life.”

The relationships among the school, community, family, and church influenced study participants’ educational experiences and impacted their lives well beyond their years at

Adkin High School. In recalling stories of schooling, students intertwined the relationships of community, family, and church that enhanced their academic and extracurricular experiences. Students were encouraged by the community's offering support for the school, by their families' showing love for them, and by the church's providing spiritual guidance. Overall, the community, family, and church reinforced the school's ideals of always striving to do your best.

### The Other Story

Besides the stories of the relationships among school, community, family, and church and how they influenced the educational experiences of Adkin High School students, there is another story that emerged: tales of inequities, resistance, struggle, and triumph that are significant to the cultural preservation of Adkin High School and its students. The external inequities of resources and funding were obvious to the students who decided to take action in 1951, as were the external inequities of educational opportunities to students who challenged the Freedom of Choice Plan to desegregate the all-White high school in 1964. This other story examines relationships in the context of internal and external inequities in the educational experiences of Adkin High School students.

### External Inequities

The inequitable conditions and resources at Adkin High School compared to those at Grainger High School and other White schools led to the resistance orchestrated by the Class of 1952. The inequities included having to pay one dollar to take a typing class that was offered for free at the other school, no blinds in classrooms on the north side of the school, and the lack of a gymnasium. One student explained:

During the fall of our senior year our gym burned, nicknamed "the Barn." And the Barn was a barn-like structure that was built by the carpentry and brick masonry

students. The only heat in the place was two pot-bellied stoves in diagonal corners. And they were both condemned because they were too close to the wall. Our gym burned, and the PTA was told that we could not get a new gym, because there was not money in the budget. But it turns out that Grainger High School had just got a new gym.

She continued that they got the resistance idea “from our social studies class. We were studying about the auto workers, and what they used to obtain what they wanted. You know they’d go on strike. So it seemed like a good idea.”

### Resistance

Adkin High School students were aware of the inequities that plagued their school. They saw firsthand the decrepit conditions of the school’s facilities and they held the used books that were sent from Grainger High School once they had completed their use of them. The final blow for the group of 1952 seniors was seeing school officials fund construction of a second gymnasium for the White high school when the makeshift gymnasium built by Adkin High School students had recently burned down.

Out of these inequities emerged a student-led resistance. The Class of 1952 spearheaded a walkout in response to their denied request for additional facilities and improved school conditions. This heroic show of unity and commitment left a lasting impression on all students who remember that historic event in their lives. As a result of this student-led resistance, school authorities designated funds and the following year built a gymnasium and locker rooms, two hygiene rooms, two home economics labs, and three vocational shops at Adkin High School (Kinston Free Press, 1979).

The community became involved after the walkout. According to Beulah Hussey, after the students walked out Mr. Stewart contacted the Citizen’s Welfare League for help and Mrs. Alice Hannibal stepped in to help and speak for the students. It would be Mrs.

Hannibal who years later petitioned the school board to allow her son and another Black female to enter the all-White high school under the Freedom of Choice Plan.

One student organizer of the Class of 1952's walkout provided a detailed story of the events leading up to, during, and after this historic event. His recollections mirror those of the other student organizers that I interviewed, and I felt that it was important to include what happened during November 1951 in great detail. His account answers the following questions:

[Where did the idea for the student walkout originate?]

This was a group that started this and it was started in the 12A class, 12A homeroom class. Well, members of the 12A class, give or take. There were 15 or 20 of us in there. We were talking among ourselves as to the conditions that we were in there at the old Adkin High School. We're talking about a school that was 50 years or more then, with the conditions. Each one of us sitting there were getting ideas. One would say, "Well, look at the water out there." And the other one would say, "And the broken windows." It was a round-table discussion among us that way.

[What was your role in the walkout?]

Yes, I was part of the action that went on as far as the walkout. And my position at Adkin was I was the chief patrolman. I was the policeman. I was the chief police officer. With my position to the school, that we were protected at all times, and we did not violate anything on the street that would offend, anything that would cause any city police to have arrested one of us doing anything wrong.

[How did the group plan for the walkout?]

We had our secret meetings. We had our brief meetings during the recess hour. And we finalized all of it. The last big meeting we asked the school principal could we use the cafeteria...I apologize, the auditorium for that, and he questioned us, "What's going on?" "Oh, we're planning something for graduation," you know, and we did tell a little fib and say that we were planning something for graduation, and we just wanted to be to ourselves for a little while, you know. He permitted that with the understanding that there was nothing going on that was illegal or we were not trying to undermine the school system or anything. And we met twice, and we got our thoughts together, and we planned our day that we would send a delegate to the school board asking for conditions for the old Adkin campus to be bettered.

[What were some of the conditions that needed attention and what was the school board's response?]

Things such as broken windows. Asked the committee to fix those. Partially heated classrooms, books that were in very poor condition, once you received at Adkin High School books that had been used by other schools before being sent to Adkin High School. Classroom facilities, old broken down seats that had not been fixed in a long time. Classroom conditions, overcrowded. Water standing all over the school grounds during hours. We also complained about extracurricular activities as far as our Old Barn, we referred to it as the gym, but we would refer to it as the Barn. Very poor seating space, crowded all around when there were other schools who had much much more than we did. We also complained about sports and facilities that we did not have, recreation facilities. But anyway, the school board denied all of our requests.

[So what was the group's next plan, after the board's denial?]

There was a plan that we would walk out. Once going to the school board, they tabled that and said they didn't have the funds. And they came back to us that no, none of our demands was accepted at that particular time. It was decided then among that same 12A class, that we were going to walk out. We were going to walk out...now how are we going to let the rest of the school know that we're going? We had a meeting that was not on school grounds, every representative, grades 9 through 12, and we told them our plans, and they carried it back to their class. "All we want you to do is tell your class when you hear a certain announcement, to walk out." The high school students would go. We did not include the elementary students for fear that they perhaps would have told what our plans were, so we didn't include them.

We held our meeting...and by the way, I want to go back and say something. We asked the school principal could we hold a meeting in the cafeteria, uh in the auditorium on one, two occasions. We did ask him could we be in privacy for that. And he looked at us sort of funny, but he agreed that we could have privacy. And we demanded that nobody but him, could come in if he wanted to. And we did have some problems with one or two teachers, who wanted to come in there to see what we were doing. I was head of that patrol. We had students on the doors to keep faculty members out, and we were doing that for their protection. And one particular teacher that I had problems with, he's dead today, Pryor Houston. He just insisted that he was coming through. Well, I'm the one that ordered that Pryor Houston be physically handled, you know, if he tried to come through. He didn't. And that's how we struck. We went out after the red pocketbook was announced, all the students went out, and then we went back and got the elementary students and put them in between us and we left the school.

[Were teachers involved in the walkout?]

We did not include any teachers. They were not aware of what we were going to do, even though a few of them claimed that, "Well, we thought we knew. We blah, blah this."

[How did all the students know when to walk out?]

One of our classmates made the suggestion, "I know what! Let's say that I lost a red pocketbook." A student suggested that she be named as having lost a red pocketbook. That was the key for the entire class with the exception the elementary students, to strike. And it was announced by the school secretary that morning. She announced it over the intercom, and all of the high school students began to get their books together, walking out. Teachers were all surprised, "What's going on?"

[How would you describe what happened next?]

We put the elementary students between high school students. We put every one of them between us, and we walked down and we went on through the streets, and we had patrolmen on bicycles. The bicycles were going forward and we did not block traffic. We held up. We had it planned. We didn't create any problems for police. We left the school, Tower Hill Road, went up Tower Hill Road to Adkin Street and made our way to Queen Street to Washington Street, and Washington Street back to the elementary school.

[Did anyone carry signs and did the group make loud noises while you were walking?]

No signs. [Other participants reported that a few students did carry signs.] We were peaceful. We were not loud. We just walked. We were not in the middle of the street. We were on the right side of Queen Street, walking on the sidewalk. There were bicycles, there were other boy students at that time, they were not men. We were boy students on bicycles. We made sure that we did not block crossings, intersections or streets. There were bicycles up ahead to make sure that the light was properly changed, and we were stopping waiting for the lights to change. We didn't block anybody, and neither did we allow elementary students to get out of line. We kept them within us. And we stayed there until every elementary student's parents came for them. We did not leave them at all.

[How long did the group plan before the walkout took place?]

Roughly 2 months. Roughly 2 months I would think, before the occurrence.

[Did any adults in the community assist your group?]

Mrs. Alice Hannibal, at that time was the only adult person that came to us and assisted and offered her help. In the form of intellectual advice. In form of advice of

how to organize ourselves as far as meeting the school board. That's the way she advised. She offered to be a representative with us. She was hurt, not physically, but mentally through a lot of Blacks who were afraid to join us. Mrs. Hannibal was a very outspoken, third person, well versed with her words, whereas people said, "Well, I would not come. I can't come. I'll offer prayer." We don't need prayer. We need assistance as far as your person. She was able to speak, and she did. And she did have one or two other people that did assist her. Mrs. Ann Whitehead was one of those, and I'm not sure of all the names of the one or two others, but yes, Mrs. Alice Hannibal was the basic one.

[What happened once you all returned to school after the walkout that day?]

Once we got back to the school, a delegate from The Free Press, came to the high school. They wanted a picture of us and our leaders. Well, we knew what they were after at that time. They were trying to find out who was leading us. That's what they wanted to know. They weren't concerned about the demands, they wanted to know who our leader was. I told our Senior Class President that a delegate from The Free Press was at the door. And they didn't try to come in. They were very polite, but they wanted a picture of us and our leader. Well, we refused the picture. We told them we weren't interested in a picture being taken of our leaders, what we're interested in is if you would take a picture of our demands, such as the broken windows, the water on the grounds. "Go over there and take a picture of the gymnasium." They refused to do that. They refused to do that, and they went back with no pictures. We didn't want any picture of us and our leaders. But they were more interested in finding out who our leaders were, thinking that it was probably school personnel, and they were going to handle them, and we felt like that person would get fired or whatever, and they were interested in cutting us down. We weren't interested in that. So we refused the picture.

[How did the day end and what happened in the days after?]

As a group, you know, we went back to the school and held a meeting in the auditorium. We went to the auditorium. Planning then whether or not the ones that were just finding out, you know, who were against it, and here's the reasons that we had done that, what we've done. And this is what we're demanding and all that. Please know that. OK? If we should have to stay home, don't be in the streets, and don't create problems.

I think school was only closed for one day. I think that day we went back to school. Nothing happened after that. And about a week later, The Free Press did print pictures of the broken windows and the little water might have been on the campus, but only was referred to as lightly, slighting the things that they didn't think were significant enough for us to do what we did.

Another student fondly recalled her involvement in the walkout and how anxious she was for it to begin. She remembered that she and a friend “were in the auditorium during study hall, and a young lady in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade was on stage” practicing a song for an upcoming competition at school. Once they made the announcement that “Carolyn Coefield has lost her pocketbook,” she did not remember what happened with the young lady on the stage because “we all went out to help her find that.” (laughter)

At the time, the student organizers were careful not to include any teachers or school personnel as leaders in their plans or even inform them of it. Teachers could not be blamed for the walkout; however, one student said, “But what you could blame them for is teaching students to stand up for what your rights are, or what your rights should be.” She added:

Now of course the schools were supposedly “separate but equal.” In truth they were separate but very unequal. It’s too bad we didn’t do that Class of ’52 vs. the Board of Education! But after that...of course we were seniors, so whatever we accomplished with the strike, we didn’t benefit from, because we were leaving.

The Class of 1952 is admired by all Adkin High School classes before and after them because of the changes their actions brought about at the school – a gymnasium and additional classrooms were built. This group of students changed the course of Adkin High’s history forever. A student from another class said this about them:

That was a different class. They brought about a lot of change. That was the class that walked out. But that class was always tight. They came in to Adkin, that class had jelled to begin with. They stuck together even as freshmen. They were the ones that started the reunion. They were the first ones to have a reunion. And then others of us started buying into it. But they were the ones who had made up in their minds that it was time for change. And the story goes...my brother was there, and knew all the rest of them. When everybody heard ‘red purse’ they were supposed to get up. So they began the real change at Adkin. I’m not sure anybody in the Class of ’51 would have done that.

There were mixed reactions from the community. One student remembered the negative comments from some Blacks while they were walking:

They couldn't figure out what was going on. And some, I was told directly by some spectators there, "You know, you're hurting yourself. You're hurting yourself." And one in particular told me, "Well, you walked out from that school. You'll never go back there again. White folks aren't going to let you go back there again." But we graduated.

Another student remembered a negative comment from a White community member.

As we walked without saying anything. Everybody was startled. And there was one big guy, one big White guy, who said, "So this is what we pay our teachers for!" And we didn't say anything, we just continued on our way. But we did not make any noise or anything. Very orderly.

I was interested in learning whether any of the student organizers' family members knew of their plans. Some knew and others did not. Some parents knew and, even though the upperclassmen had been instructed not to tell the younger students, some told their siblings what was being planned. Consequently, once the walkout started many of the lower grades' students knew what was happening. A student organizer offered this assessment:

But we decided not to bring in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, because they would go home and talk to Momma and Daddy about it and Momma might work in Miss Jane's kitchen, and might say something to Miss Jane. And the next thing you know pressure would be put on the parents to stop the students from doing what they had planned to do. Each class decided who would be...like the senior class decided who would be their spokesperson, and likewise the junior, sophomore, and freshman. But it was decided that you would take persons whose parents were not obligated to the White society. You know, maybe somebody whose mother didn't work in somebody's kitchen or who didn't rely on them for their livelihood. And we chose people who would be outspoken, and who would be able to versify our needs.

Most of the students who participated in the walkout did not have the same angst about returning home afterwards, like this student whose father was a teacher at Adkin High School:

When I got home, I guess I was scared to go home, because my father taught, and he did not know anything about it. And the idea that his daughter got up in class and walked out without permission, I didn't know how to go home. But I did. And of course after things were told, and they understood what was going on, he accepted it, but at first I was afraid. I thought I was going to have to go to Mary Brown's house. (laughter) I really did. And of course they all worked with us.

Shortly over a decade after the Class of 1952's walkout, the Black community initiated challenges to the Pearsall Plan's Freedom of Choice program. The Plan was North Carolina's response to complying with the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision. One student recalled the plan of action that included twenty families who would petition the Kinston Graded Schools for a transfer to Grainger High School. Students were chosen by their academic standing in that "who was the strongest to go, and they didn't want to send anybody who intellectually couldn't handle it." The argument was that Adkin High School students were "inferior intellectually to them, and we wanted to prove that we were not inferior, and that what we were doing is that we just didn't have the same opportunities with books and things like that." They cited the fact that there was one microscope for all the students in a class at Adkin High School and one microscope for every student in a class at Grainger High School. The aim was to "show them that our kids were intelligent, they just needed a chance with the same materials and things like the White kids had." In the end, only two families continued the process and successfully petitioned for the transfer to Grainger High School.

The Black church was instrumental in preparing students and families for their pioneering decision to desegregate North Carolina schools. One student recalled the church's involvement in this way:

Well, I think that church was very good. We had meetings at the church, and we went on Freedom Rides, like the Freedom Train, like it was a train or a bus. It would be a bus, but we called it a Freedom Train. But anyway, we would go to these retreats. It's kind of like a retreat area, like a place where everybody can spend the night. They would just talk about what to do, what to say, what not to do, what not to say, and just went over all kinds of things that would help you to survive some of this that was going on. Because there were a lot of people doing this from different areas in North Carolina, not just what was happening in Kinston. So these people on the

Freedom Train would be from all over. It would be sponsored by churches. So I think that the churches were very good about doing that.

Another decade would pass before Kinston City Schools embraced full desegregation for all children. When I questioned one student as to why Kinston resisted full desegregation and only complied once the federal government threatened to withdraw school funding, he stated, “They wanted to keep White supremacy around. They felt like that would degrade the White race. If our children mingled and got the same level of education.”

This Adkin graduate recalled the lawsuit that led to full desegregation of Kinston City Schools and described his reaction. I asked him if he remembered any violence associated with White resistance to desegregation. He replied:

No, it didn't get ugly. No, it didn't because that was part of the process. See, anything they did that was too derogative after that suit went on, that could be used against them too. So in fact they were more humbled and submissive afterward. Yeah, that was the problem. And they did lose it [federal money]. Oh, yeah, I think they got threatened. In most cases they were threatened with losing it if they didn't comply, and most of them came and came into compliance so they could keep their money coming. So it was an interesting thing. I enjoyed the movement and the threats. I got some letters.

## Triumph

Out of this resistance to inequities came stories of triumph. The Class of 1952's triumph – their student-led walkout – was described by a student organizer:

One of the proudest moments I guess in high school was the way the student body came together as one body and how they stuck together, and we all had the same purpose in mind. The student body strike that we had, which was initiated by the senior class, and the entire student body for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades were brought into it gradually as the plans were being made, and I guess we shocked a lot of people, because the adults had been told that what we wanted we couldn't get.

For another student, triumph came in the form of resilience. She recognized the inequities but chose to overcome them through her state of mind and personal acts of defiance:

Even though the things that we are saying may seem sort of negative, we didn't have negative attitudes toward it. And our teachers would tell us certain things. I recall one teacher told us, "When you girls go to buy ribbons, don't buy one yard, don't buy two, but always buy fractional parts, because they can't do fractions." (laughter) And when we went to the store to drink water at Rose's, we would always sample a little of the White Water, and a little of the Black Water to see if there was a difference. But we were not taught negativity. So we didn't worry about it, because we were happy. We had a loving atmosphere at the school, so therefore we laughed at some of the things I guess that we should have been furious about. And we enjoyed using those renewed books. They looked semi-new. (laughter) And we kept going.

Ultimately, these students were taught that education was their triumph over the inequities of Jim Crow and White supremacy.

It was something that the White people around here never expected, and from Black students who they thought could not learn, did not have the capacity to learn. However, our teachers were dedicated and they knew we could. And it was drummed in our minds that the way out of our situation was education.

#### Internal Inequities

Just as the resistance to inequities led to triumph for the student-led walkout, the inequities of tracking, geographical differences, and socioeconomic status also influenced the educational experiences of students and shaped their lives beyond high school.

#### Tracking

One student explained how tracking started in the elementary grades:

And after the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, there's a tracking method used. Those of us who were in 5A came across town to Tower Hill School, yes, I think it was Tower Hill School, and we stayed there, we stayed with the children who were in 5A, and after 5A of course, we went to 5, 6, and 7. And at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> at 8<sup>th</sup> grade, then we went to Adkin High School. That was tracking a long time ago. So the tracking nowadays is nothing new.

Classes at each grade level were divided by alphabet with "A" students of highest ability, "B" students at the next level, and so on. This distinction changed at Adkin High School. All grade levels were labeled "A" as in 9A, 10A, 11A and 12A, and numbers were added. However, one student noted, "12A1 was 12A. I guess to sort of take away some of

the stigma of A, B, and C, but it amounted to the same thing.” Students on the A1 track were labeled as college preparatory with the A2 and other tracks labeled as general education. College preparatory students took a prescribed set of courses with few options as electives. Students in 12A1 “had to take an extra semester of math. Because our math teacher thought that we needed some more math.” They took English, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics if they wanted to, and at least two years of French. One student recalled that 12A1 students in typing class were told, “Now all of you all who are going to college, you know, you only need one year of typing.” She replied to the teacher, “No, I think we need two,” so I took another typing class, and you know that’s something I’ll never forget, and I thank God every day that I sat in there and took that [second] typing class.”

When asked, none of the students knew how they were placed in the college preparatory track or otherwise. One student commented:

But we didn’t have a choice. They had two ways there, but you couldn’t choose what you wanted to do. They assigned you to the grade that they wanted you to...the courses, classes and all of that. They didn’t even let us take grades that would cause us to be able to go to college. College preparatory and home economics that was about it.

Another student vividly remembered the first day of high school, how he was tracked into 9B, and how that decision affected his life and career choice:

I remember exactly the way that it happened. In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade that morning, Tuesday after Labor Day, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, and I remember that well, because I’ve got a little sister born that day, my first day of high school. But what happened, all of us had assembled outside because there was no auditorium at Kinston College. But when we gathered that morning all the students that had been at Tower Hill or wherever they came from, they were told to go with Mr. Barfield. He was the homeroom teacher. That was a new group who had just come in from the city. We were from the country. We were there and Miss Payne, Mrs. Murphy, Jack Murphy’s wife, that was her first year of teaching. Then she was to take the rest of us and go to a certain class. That’s how they had B. And the group kind of jelled together, and there was some fellowship reason that I didn’t want to go to the other classes, and didn’t realize that this was a special group over here, that we are the secondary. Well, by the time we

got to know everybody, then we were just 9B. But didn't realize what was really happening until it was my senior year. My eyes really came open. And when they started talking about who was going to Johnson C. Smith and who was going to A&T and going to Elizabeth City, and I had a scholarship, and never could take it, so I thought the best thing for me to do was to go to the Air Force.

I asked him whether students were ever moved between the groupings and how he became class valedictorian from the general education track. He explained:

They could [move between A and B]. They could. Some did. But nobody ever suggested to me, and I really didn't realize what was happening to me, until my senior year. That's when I became aware that I had been routed through that way. I had made better grades in the classes I was taking than some of those that were in the A section.

One student made the decision to not take French her senior year, and she was removed from the college preparatory track. This did not impede her ability to go to college; however, she does acknowledge the perceived stigma of not graduating with the 12A1 group instead of graduating with the 12A3 general course students. Students acknowledged the inequities of the tracking system. Another student recalled the preference given to the students who came to Adkin High School from the Catholic school:

And then we went from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to the 9<sup>th</sup> we were tested again. I was in 9A, academic, college prep in the projects, and the down side to being placed in an academic classes, you had French II, all the courses for college, and then being in the projects, and parents with so many children, that I knew that I wouldn't probably get to go to college. When we went to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, there was a Catholic school that only went to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and when all those kids from the Catholic school came over to Adkin, they were automatically put in 9A. We found that we were just as smart as a lot of them.

Another student, who came from the Catholic school to Adkin High School, recalled his experience.

Yeah, that was amazing because some of the people that I'd been in school with for 7 years, from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade period that I was with at the Catholic school, and many of the people that I was in school with were pretty smart people. I didn't know what they were learning in the public schools. I mean you know they had different books and different everything. When we went over there, I guess they tried to figure out how would we fit these people in, because we don't have test results for them. And

all we knew was that they had this hierarchy of class designation, and from the way we were told, the smart kids were in like 9A, and then the next group would be 9A1 and 9A2 and 9A3 and 9A4 and 9A5s. So you know, I wonder what group we're going to be in? How they'll spread us out. We're not going to be seeing each other every day anymore. So they made us 9A6 and that was a big, because they couldn't do 9A? I guess.

### Rural versus City

Students who did not live within the city limits experienced the negative effects of inequitable tracking policies. As one student explained, "We had an A class and a B class, and had C classes at one time. The A section was mostly the city kids, and the B section was kids that came from the rural. The C section was those who were kind of slow learners."

Yet, another student was able to parlay this inequity into an academic triumph.

When we went there we had to take the state examination all over again, because we were coming from the country, and somehow they act like country folks didn't know whatever, so he demanded that we take the test over again. We took the test, and they started us with the test when we come in. Well, my mama got sick, and I had to stay home and take care of her, because she had asthma, and people did not know how to deal with her with asthma, so I missed some time in the test, but when I went back, I picked up where I left off. And I made the test, I finished the test, and it was accepted. So we had a play in the school, and along then the girls, we wore cotton stockings and we had to walk all that distance anyway. So when I went to go on the stage to say my speech, not boasting but most of the times I had a long speech given, and they began to laugh at me by the way I was dressed. So when Mr. McElrath came to the podium, he said, "You owe this lady an apology." And I didn't know what that was. But anyway, he said, "I've been here eighteen years, and this lady has made the highest grade on the state examination than anybody has made since I've been here." So then they began to applaud, and you know, carry on like that. But after that I found out they had the 8<sup>th</sup> grade A, which was made up not of intellectual ability, but was made up of children who had more or less a financial backing.

She continued:

We didn't know that until later, but we did find out why they were put in these categories. Then they had an 8B-1 and 8B-2. And us poor people, coming from the country, there was no way we could get there, were put in 8B-2, not because we couldn't know anything, but because we were in that financial grade level. So we had to stay there, but then when they found out that I was really knowledgeable about some things. Suddenly they wanted to promote me to 8A, and I refused to go, because I don't feel like even then I had some type of intellectual abilities in my little

brain that I didn't feel like people needed to put on you or take away from you because of who you were, or where you come from. So I stayed with 8B-2. And I excelled in 8B-2 until they couldn't hardly take it. (laughs)

Living outside the city limits made it virtually impossible for those students to fully participate in afterschool activities. Those students could not stay after school to practice for athletics or band and admitted that they "had to do so much walking and missed the afterschool activities." Some students who lived on farms were expected to come home and work in the afternoons. One student said, "When I went home there was a mule waiting for us."

The perception that rural students were not as capable as city kids left lasting impressions on one student. He recalled how the teachers allowed students to make negative remarks about "country" children and how even teachers made unbecoming remarks about them:

A teacher said something to me one time that bothers me even until now. I went to try out for the glee club, and the teacher had us singing different parts, and I knew that all the kids, practically all them in the glee club were city kids. But she said, the teacher said to me, and everybody said she was joking with me, but I didn't take it as a joke. She said, "Oh, sit down. Everybody knows that you won't be able to sing with that corn field voice." And everybody laughed. I mean that was a joke for all of them. And I never went back to that glee club. And she probably died not knowing that she had wounded me that way. But that played right into the hands of all the rest of the glee club. When she said that, everybody laughed. "You've got a corn-field voice." And sometimes we can damage people even through joking...if she was joking. But there was a separation, or it was really discrimination. They didn't look at it that way.

I hate to use the word, discrimination, but we practiced a lot of discrimination, because of the difference between the rural kids and the city kids. And the teachers let the students rule. They would often use that if they said something about me. "Oh, he's the student from the country. He came from a country school." Most of the rural students felt less than, because we didn't have the history that these others had, and it was kind of hard to describe.

## Poor versus Better Off

Students revealed stories of inequities based on socioeconomic standing. One student felt that “poor folk” were assigned to the non-college track. She said, “The boys, they put them in as carpenters and bricklayers, and the girls, they put us in sewing and cooking and things of that nature, that they felt like that was as far as we were going.” She continued that they thought “we weren’t going to be able to go to college and do any of the other things. But we did, I mean, a lot of them did.” Other students told of misconceptions that only students from “up there” families could be successful, and one student voiced frustration with the display of favoritism throughout the school. He said, “My least favorite [memory] is favoritism among the teachers and staff toward students. The elite family whom I know when some students did not do well, but they were favored because of the status of their parents.”

## Triumph

Just as other stories of external inequities produced accompanying stories of triumph, this student’s story ended in triumph the day he got a car.

My dad bought a car on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, and started teaching me how to drive. My birthday was on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> I got my driver’s license, and I started to drive. And that’s when I felt like I belonged to Adkin, because when I came on campus driving, people who had ignored me and called me country and that kind of thing, I was somebody suddenly because I had a car.

And parents couldn’t make a way for you to get there, but when I started driving, I would have a carload everyday from Vine Swamp. And I remember how much it meant to me that we charged them \$1.50 a week to ride. And I bought gas out of that to get back and forth to school. Each one of the students paid me \$1.50 a week.

External and internal inequities existed during segregated education. The external inequities affected all Adkin High School students. The internal inequities of tracking impacted students who were placed in the non-college preparatory classes and excelled

academically. Those students reasoned that these inequities were based on rurality and the perception that rural students were incapable of achieving on the same level as city students. These geographical differences also impacted the rural students' abilities to participate in extracurricular activities, and socioeconomic differences impacted rural and city students, who recalled stories of favoritism and elitism.

### Summary

The relationships of schooling and the influence of these relationships on the educational experiences of Adkin High School students were captured in the stories they told. Their stories of relationships among the school, community, family, and church revealed that the interactions between school personnel and students mirrored those between students and community, family, and church members. Stories of caring and concerned teachers, motivating and encouraging communities and families, and positive church experiences testify to the influence of these relationships on the lives of Adkin High School students. Some students recalled stories of negative relationships and experiences, and there are stories of external and internal inequities that influenced the educational experiences of students. Through the external inequities of available resources and school conditions, the Adkin High School Class of 1952 led a student walkout. The internal inequities of the school's tracking system placed rural students outside of college preparatory classes, and students recognized the unequal treatment of students of lower socioeconomic standing. Overall, the stories of external inequities ended in triumph for all students because conditions in the school and Black community improved soon after, while stories of internal inequities brought triumph to those students who persevered and overcame these inequities.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

Adkin High School students retold their stories of schooling relative to five areas: 1) principals and their relationships with family and community, 2) teachers and their relationships with family and community, 3) community involvement and school as the center of community culture, 4) parental and family support relative to school relationships, and 5) the role of church and faith in their educational experiences. I received responses that affirmed the literature reviewed earlier in Chapter 2 (Siddle Walker, 2000; Siddle Walker, 1996; Cecelski, 1994; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Rodgers, 1975; Beverly, 2007; Patterson, 2005).

Because of the similarity of relationships between the Adkin High School students with relationships described in the literature are compelling, I found that the stories of struggle and triumph through inequities and resistance enriched the aforementioned stories of relationships and educational experiences of Adkin High School students. Studying inequities and subsequent resistance gave me insight into the outside forces that influenced the students' experiences. Understanding the inside forces of academic tracking based on geography and economics helped me better define the relationships and ensuing experiences of Adkin High School students. These inside forces are often only briefly acknowledged and rarely examined in segregated education literature.

## The Story of Relationships

### Principals and Their Relationships

Siddle Walker (2000) asserts that “the single central figure in segregated education was the principal” (p. 274), based on her review of valued segregated education literature. In particular, she notes that the principal of the segregated high school yielded power and influence in the school and throughout the Black community. He was given authority to operate the school, to the extent that it did not thwart White authority, with power to oversee personnel issues, implement programs, and mandate school policies. The segregated high school principal was a leader among Black educators, and he would serve as the liaison between them and White educators and leaders. His leadership acumen extended to civic and church involvement, where he could foster relationships and goodwill acts that in turn would benefit the school and students.

The relationships among the principal, teachers, students, and community portrayed in *Their Highest Potential* describe Principal Dillard as interested in the students to a point that he could call all students by their names. He made himself available to students when they needed someone to talk with, and he was instrumental in assisting students in going to college who did not have the financial means within their families to pay for education. Dillard is remembered by students as being “congenial, motivating, and often overtly helpful” (Siddle Walker, p. 132), and teachers acknowledged that he “demonstrated a concern and interest in the teachers that went beyond their job performance (p. 132).” He was known throughout the community and admired for his ability to make everyone feel valued and respected despite his or his educational attainment and stature.

In my study, Adkin High School students did not describe relationships with Principal Stewart in the same way as the Caswell County Training School students described relationships with Dillard. Stories of their relationships with Stewart were limited, but he was respected by students. It is uncertain whether he knew all students by name, as one participant fondly remembered that he mispronounced her name at graduation, but she dared not correct him. At one point, he was responsible for distributing college scholarships that helped students further their education. Adkin High School students scarcely recalled Stewart's participation in civic activities, and only one participant, who was a fellow church member, spoke of his church involvement. Two other participants who attended his church failed to mention Stewart when asked about the principal's relationship with the church. This could be explained by the fact that the previously mentioned participant also had a relationship with Stewart's daughter. Most students had a cursory relationship with Stewart; however, one student credited the principal with being instrumental in directing his career choice, and this student returned to Adkin High School as a teacher under Stewart. He recalled Stewart's encouraging him to obtain an advanced degree and training.

#### Teachers and Their Relationships

Adkin High School students admired their teachers for the care and concern they offered, their commitment to the overall well-being of students, and their competence in subject matter. The relationships between teachers and students mainly occurred in the classroom where lasting impressions were formed of the level of care for students to "get their work" and understand the importance of education. Concern for students went beyond academics when teachers offered advice on a full range of issues from health to character development. Teachers served as mentors for students who may not have had positive

reinforcement at home or who, in some cases, needed a positive male figure to serve as a role model.

Teachers were highly respected in the Black community during segregation. Particularly in the rural communities, teachers had obtained more educational success being college graduates than most others in the community and they could be held in esteem for their accomplishments for parents and students to admire. Adkin High School students had limited recollections of relationships between the teachers and the community. I cannot offer any explanation as to the limited responses by students other than that their definition of community was limited to their own neighborhoods.

Family relationships with teachers were relegated to an understanding that parents and families supported teachers by sending children to school to learn. Teachers were entrusted to prepare students for a better future than their parents and families had. Adkin High School students of the 1960s did not talk about home visits from teachers as the students from earlier years did, although all students noted the importance of PTA meetings for parents and teachers to interact.

Some participants recalled the number of teachers who attended their church and the impact teachers made in reinforcing classroom knowledge in Sunday School. In earlier years teachers were expected to and did attend church services throughout the community. One participant echoed the sentiment of a Rougemont student who proclaimed that “preachers were good, but teachers were great!” (Noblit & Dempsey, 1996, p. 129).

Jeffries (1999) summarized the roles that educators at the segregated school played in preparing students for the future.

Educators assumed many roles as they sought to imbue their students with the necessary tools for life. In many regards these teachers created a cocoon for the

students as they nurtured and developed them before they had to independently experience the outside world. Through this role the school served to protect the African American students from the many injustices that they were destined to experience. In this protective role more than simply shielding students, however, educators wanted to make them aware of their role in actively challenging the future economic, social, and political injustices that throughout American history has shaped African-Americans reality.

For Adkin High School students, this was accomplished through caring and committed teachers.

### Community Involvement and the Relationships of Community

The community provided tangible support to the school by raising funds and attending school events (Siddle Walker, 1996) while intangible support from the community provided encouragement to students through family, neighbors, and the church. The Black high school was the center of community culture during segregation. I was reminded that the high school was the central location for disseminating information throughout the community and the facilities were most likely venues for community-wide activities like gospel concerts and programs sponsored by civic organizations. For some Adkin High School students, particularly those in school after 1953, the city recreation department enhanced their educational experiences by offering access to sports that would prepare them for high school competition and providing outlets for extending relationships with classmates beyond the classroom.

Cecelski (1994) found that community and school life were interconnected for Hyde County residents. He noted that the school “became a community center for Blacks all over Hyde County. Civic and church groups held adult classes, choir rehearsals, and social events in the main building, and the HCTS staff organized clubs and activities that included both students and unenrolled children” (p. 64). Although Adkin High School students did not

mention stories of the school being used for adult classes, there was mention of the White community using the school to train domestic help. A 1938 Kinston Free Press article titled “Training School for Colored ‘Help’ ” outlined a recommendation from the community service committee of the Rotary Club to institute a “training school for servants” using the home economics teachers as instructors and that “the school would probably be held at Adkin High School for Negroes, where instruction in domestic science has been of a high order”.

The importance of community should permeate conversations of segregated education. The relationship among the school, the community, and family was reciprocal. Jones (1981) noted that the school served the community and family in correlation to the community and family supporting the school. Milner and Howard (2004) suggested that school desegregation caused the “dis-centering” or imbalance of the Black community. They wrote “There is a nexus between families, neighborhoods, and schools. And they interact, and they connect in interesting ways. A change in one disrupts the equilibrium of the system. So it has to find a new center and rebalance itself” (p. 291). Critics of school desegregation could argue that the system has yet to rebalance itself.

#### Families and Their Relationships

Most family relationships with the school were relegated to attending PTA meetings and supporting school activities and events after the school day ended. Parents and families were not part of site-based decision making teams with school personnel, and they did not regularly volunteer to visit the school during school hours. In fact, it was a major indictment on a student who had to bring a parent to school during working hours because parents could not afford to leave their jobs. Beyond support for the school through the PTA, parents and families supported the school by instilling the value of education and maintaining high

expectations for students in their behavior and academics. Families extended concern for students' classmates, too.

Adkin High School students told stories of family support and parental involvement similar to those students at Caswell County Training School (Siddle Walker, 1996). The author documented the family support provided through the PTA and certain family advocates who worked tirelessly to bring secondary education to Caswell County. Her message was the “Black parents were shown to be victims of an oppressive system but are also depicted as agitators to the system, people who searched for ways to achieve better educational opportunities for their children (p. 9)”. Siddle Walker (2000) defines these advocates as “parents and community leaders who interposed themselves between the needs of the school community and the power of the White school board and made requests on behalf of the school (p. 271)”.

The paramount support that Adkin High School students received from their families was love. One student described the love he felt from his mother who was a disabled widow with eight children. He spoke about her capacity to motivate them to always do their best and strive for excellence. His mother was not able to attend school functions, but she made sure that he had clean clothes. She did not have money to give him for lunch, but she cooked a full breakfast for him each morning before he went to school. This familial love extended to older siblings who provided encouragement and monetary support to their younger brothers and sisters.

Morris (1997) found in his study of three St. Louis desegregated schools that the predominately Black school located in the Black community “maintained a partnership that reflected mutual trust and respect” (p. 250). He noted that “families viewed the school as an

integral part of the community” and “many of the parents were actively involved in the affairs of the school” (p. 250). Closer examination of that school’s leadership and teaching force reveal a dedication and care for the overall well being of its students. The characteristics of this school and its relationships resembles the schools noted this study’s literature review and the stories told by Adkin High School students.

Again Adkin High School students did have a bountiful of stories relating their church participation and their school-family-church relationships. Every participant regularly attended church or Sunday School. Most were quick to point out that attendance was not an option but they enjoyed going to church and participating in church activities.

#### Church and its Relationships

Siddle Walker (2000) neglected to include “general information on segregation and desegregation, such as race relations, transportation, White perceptions, legal cases and strategies, religious influences, and higher education (p. 256)”. Her decision to exclude some factors is reasonable. However, to neglect the impact of church and faith on the educational experiences of segregated education diminishes our understanding of the mutually interdependent role of the two. Indeed, Siddle Walker’s seminal work on segregated education is peppered with stories of church involvement with the school and the influence of church in the lives of those at the segregated school (Siddle Walker, 1996).

Several works have cited the importance of church and faith through generational dialogues (Hughes, 2003; Beverly, 2007). Hughes (2003) denoted pedagogy of hope to describe the impact of faith on the lives of his participants not only in religious terms but faith in the federal government and other people. My study actively pursued the importance of the church as an institution in the educational experiences of Adkin High School students.

Several participants remarked that children today are not actively engaged in church like they were. Billingsley (1991) examined the “church’s role in assisting families and in supporting educational institutions (p. 427)” and found that “it is in the public school system that the Black church will for some time make its greatest impact on the education of African American children and youth (p. 438).”

Adkin High School students described their relationships at church, with their families, and within the community. Their relationships at school mainly centered around the teachers and other students. Adkin High School was a place of pride for them. This school pride is still evident in the voices of the graduates from as far back as sixty years ago. These students are proud to have attended this all-Black high school during segregation, and many of them lament for today’s school children who may not enjoy the experiences of schooling as they did. They vividly recall the award-winning Marching Pirates as they stepped along the Christmas parade route and the numerous state and regional athletic championships they received in football and basketball. Many of them speak with pride of being on winning debate teams that took them across the state in competitions.

The school pride for Adkin High School extends to pride for Kinston and its thriving Black communities of yesteryear. Students recalled the Black-owned businesses on Tower Hill Road, in Lincoln City, and along South Queen Street in Kinston. They were proud of their families’ accomplishments, such as having all their children graduate from high school, many of them going to college or sending their children to college, and finding success in life after Adkin High School. Also, many of them credit their church upbringing for shaping their spiritual being.

Not all relationships among the school, community, family, and church were positive. Participants told stories of their least fond memories of Adkin High School, and those students who transferred from the school to desegregate the White high school told compelling stories of harassment and abuse. There are stories of families who struggled financially, students without supportive fathers in the home, and unfavorable encouragement from the community in times of need.

### The Other Story

This study is about relationships. However, within those stories of relationships I identified, other themes emerged. The Adkin High School Class of 1952 implemented a student-led resistance in response to the White authorities' blatant oversight to the inequities of school resources and conditions. In 1964, two Adkin High School students led a resistance effort to desegregate the White high school in efforts to highlight the inequitable educational opportunities within the public school system. In both cases, student-led efforts brought about change. After the student-led walkout in 1951, additions and renovations to the school were completed in 1953. After 1964, dozens of Black students challenged the Freedom of Choice Plan and the high schools in Kinston were fully desegregated in 1971.

The inequities that occurred within the school came as a result of differences. Students who were "different" felt the inequities of academic placement based on their perceived inabilities associated with where they lived and their financial status. This politics of difference did not mete resistance on their part. Neither they nor their parents ever approached school authorities regarding their misplacement in a lower academic track, but they were able to triumph over these internal forces of inequity. And, they never forgot. One student vividly recalled the pride in knowing that she was just as smart as the students on the

college preparatory track and how much it satisfied her when she refused to move into the higher academic classes when offered. Another student reminisced over his life's accomplishments and determined that even though he was slighted by the inequities of tracking his life so far had been fulfilling. He had a successful military career and completed his college education.

Siddle Walker (1996) also captured stories of inequities and differences among students. She acknowledged "reports of variance fall primarily into differences between rural and urban children, between lighter- and darker-skinned children, and occasionally between teachers' children and other students (p. 135)". She offered the following explanations:

While few students and no teachers note these differences in describing the interactions, the critique may be a valid one, however unintentioned such a bias might have been on the teachers' part ...

Although it is reasonable that these issues may have been operative in the school environment, the degree to which they functioned is undocumented, and differences in the day-to-day interactions that teachers and principal had with students are never described ...

It should be noted that the reports of variance in treatment of students based on proximity to town, skin color, and teacher-parents were raised by only a few of the people interviewed. Moreover, those students who raise such differences in treatment also describe as many positive examples and interaction as the students who remember no differences in treatment. (p. 136-137)

Siddle Walker is not alone in her view of inequities and difference in segregated education relationships and the desire to downplay those differences in the overall scheme of remembering valued segregated education (Beverly, 2007; Patterson, 2005). However, a participant in Patterson's study of Hillside High School remarked, "If you talk to a lot of people who would really be honest with you ... [there] was some big differences (p. 115)".

The internal inequities captured in the stories of segregated education at Adkin High School were based on a rural versus city marker that caused students to be placed outside of the college preparatory track. The rural students recognized the inequities and knew that they were capable of academic excellence on the level of others students in the higher-tracked academic classes. However, they offered no resistance. These students were unable to fully participate in school activities that required after school-hour practices, and they were aware of the negative perceptions that rural students were not as smart as and did not meet the standards of the city students. This rural marker is similar to the lower social class marker described by Patterson that included students from the projects (2005). Overtime the rural marker was eliminated as additional high schools were built in the county, and these inequities did not transfer to the students from the projects in Kinston. In fact, all of the participants who identified themselves as being from the projects were placed on the college preparatory track.

My intent is not to emphasize the inequities of difference in segregated educational settings. However, I do think it is worth briefly considering those inequities as they related to the educational experiences of students affected by the inequities and consider their stories of triumph as valuable lessons for teachers and students today.

#### Self-Critique

At the start of my research on segregated education, I embraced the term “valued segregated education” drawing it from Siddie Walker’s review of literature (2000). However, I had to abandon it because of my inability to accurately define and defend the term. What does valued mean? Valued by whom? Was it valued by everyone? I find myself in a similar place as I review the stories and experiences captured in this study. There

are no wrenching stories of utter failure, no voices who offer any regrets on how their lives have unfolded, and no thoughts of Adkin High School as a place of memorable disdain. This could be a result of the number of study participants relative to the available number of Adkin High School graduates. I will not assume that stories of total failure and regret do not exist. Even though there are stories of disappointment and failure, the overall stories of relationships at Adkin High School evoke positive memories from all study participants.

Maxwell (1996) lists bias and reactivity as validity threats that I address here. I utilized reflexivity and triangulation to minimize these potential threats. I was reflexive during the data collection and analysis phases to ensure that I was consciously attentive to the sociocultural and historical realities of my perspective and voice as well as to those of my participants. I recognized the importance of asking tough, critical questions. Reflexivity entailed asking and answering those types of questions. I used reflexive triangulation (Patton, 2002) to formulate questions for myself, my study participants, and my audience. This was accomplished through “reflexive screens of culture, age, gender, class, social status, education, family, political praxis, and language values (p. 66)”. I continually asked myself questions about what I knew, what shaped my perspectives, my voice, and what I would do with the vast stories I collected. I asked questions of my study participants to discern how they knew what they knew and how their worldviews shaped their lives and experiences. As for my audience, I questioned how they perceived me and the findings I presented to them.

Researcher bias – I am a proud native of Kinston, North Carolina. I spent my elementary years at a quasi-segregated school in my community, which included Adkin High. I recall the stories of family and friends about the “good old days” at Adkin. My father graduated from Adkin, my brother went to Adkin, and I attended Adkin when it was

converted into a junior high school after desegregation. My father served on the committee that transformed part of the school into public housing and the remainder into a recreation and community meeting complex. I am an insider.

I no longer live in Kinston. I have acquired several higher education degrees, generating a different status for me compared to the average citizen. I presently attend a predominately White institution of higher learning that participants may perceive as elitist. As a result, some could view me as an outsider and no longer “one of them”.

Nonetheless, I contend that my stated bias was not a hindrance to completing this study. Being a native of Kinston afforded me direct access to the abundant number of Adkin High School graduates who still live in Kinston. When I contacted potential study participants, they quickly recognized my name and often made thoughtful comments about my mother or fondly remembered my father. Even though I did not reside in Kinston, I was highly visible before and during my data collection phase. I connected with most of the out-of-Kinston study participants during their visits back home. Whenever I spoke with potential study participants, most of them knew of my prior educational accomplishments and were proud that I was pursuing a doctoral degree. Most importantly, they were proud that I chose Adkin High School as my dissertation topic and were glad to participate in my study.

Reactivity – Maxwell (1996) defines reactivity as “the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied” (p. 91). Such influence is unavoidable, and in qualitative research the best approach to overcoming this threat is “not to eliminate this influence but to understand it and to use it productively” (p. 91). How might I influence the participant? The list of potential reactivity influences relative to oral history interviews includes leading questions, impatient probing, threatening demeanor, lacking awareness of power and

hierarchy, and absence of concern and gratitude (Glesne, 2006). Again, reflexivity was a key dimension of my approach to addressing these potential threats.

### Implications

The relationships of segregated education foster memories of caring teachers, loving families, involved communities, and church fellowship that critics today would question the usefulness of those memories in the twenty-first century school, community, family, and church. I beg to differ and offer the following suggestions.

Implications for Teacher Education – Recommendation Eleven of the North Carolina Gap Commission’s 2001 Report called for a study commission to “examine and profile the history of organized education for American Indians and African Americans in North Carolina” to “build a credible body of knowledge about minority cultures that can be used to prepare professionals, especially teachers, to more comfortably exchange or interact across ethnic/cultural lines in the classroom and beyond” (p. 22). Having education professionals prepared with the knowledge of the relationships of segregated education could provide a means by which their teaching styles could be transformed to fully embrace the ideals of the caring, concerned, committed and competent professionals during that era that emerged from this study. Also as shown from my study, they could incorporate the messages of high expectations and striving to do your best into their interactions with all students, particularly minority students. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s School of Education uses “Teaching Transforms Lives” on a number of promotional items, and I would extend that phrase to “Relationships of Teaching Transforms Lives” based on the stories of segregated education at Adkin High School.

Implications for Policymakers – Policymakers would benefit from an understanding or awareness of the relationships of segregated education when consider the requirements for teacher certification and tenure. My study captured stories of teachers who fostered relationships with students beyond their academic achievements. Teachers were concerned with the whole being of the child, and the relationships of segregated education could serve as models for assuring that teachers are capable of holistically educating students. By holistic, I mean that the student has value beyond what they score on a test in order that the teacher can receive monetary bonuses and promotion. There are characteristics of relationships of segregated education that are worth replicating in today’s school environment. As policymakers implement standards for teachers and principals, researchers and state or district staff could develop case studies of segregated education personnel highlighting their relationships with students and best practices from that era that promoted educational excellence and school pride such as those noted in my study. Also from those case studies, principals could develop a checklist used to evaluate teachers for their effectiveness in fostering relationships within and outside of the classroom.

Beyond the inequities of resources that abound in today’s resegregated schools, policymakers could ensure that only those education professionals with proven competence in their discipline who seek to understand and transform their practices to embrace minority cultures should be allowed in those schools.

Implications for Community, Family, and Church – I presented a paper on the relationships of segregated education at a conference, and a colleague who offered the closing remarks noted that my paper was perhaps the most provocative citing my observation that the Black community did not exist anymore. Initially, I was taken aback by this notion

until he further explained that I meant the Black community as I knew it growing up in Kinston. He is absolutely correct! Many Black children in some of our neighborhoods have not experienced the sense of community from other caring adults that extends the parental and family care, supervision, and love for them. They rarely have the opportunity to “rub shoulders” with Black professionals. Sadly, some of them have not encountered a single teacher or education professional that, through care and commitment, encouraged them to reach beyond their current circumstances, strive for excellence, and always do their best. I can not offer empirical evidence of the magnitude of this issue, but I am attuned to my children in my family and in my church who readily offer stories to support my observation. The Black family must return to the Black church with a purpose to prepare young people spiritually and foster relationships with caring adults.

Finally, for the city of Kinston, this study reveals that the Black community during segregation produced relationships that fostered pride and educational excellence at Adkin High School. Students recalled positive relationships at school, within the community, in the family, and at church. The caring teachers at school, the tangible and intangible support from the community, the love and value for education from the family, and the spiritual values gained from the church created a bond for students that made them strive for excellence and do their best in school while positively representing their families and community. There are opportunities for those who experienced those positive relationships to transfer that social capital across generations. As the schools within the city limits of Kinston move toward resegregation, this transfer of social capital becomes necessary for the Black children in their community.

Implications for Theory – Morris (1997) proposed that his African American theoretical framework would serve us better than the Bronfenbrenner model that we initially used in our studies of the relationships and experiences of schooling. In his case, it was a study of desegregated schools in St. Louis and the predominately Black elementary school in the historically Black inner city. In my case, the study is of a segregated all Black high school in rural eastern North Carolina. Miles apart and two generations later, I agree that his theoretical framework better serves both our cases. With one addition to his model, I would place the Black church in a prominent display within the model of school, community, family and church relationships.

Without explanation, Siddle Walker (2000) chose to exclude the church's influence in her review of segregated education literature. A likely explanation could be a desire to remain politically correct in the notion of not mixing church and state. Morris (1997) does not mention the African American church as an integral part of the school, family, and community partnerships. This could be explained by the geographical location of his study in the Midwestern United States. I contend that any work or review of segregated education in the rural South must include the influence of church and faith in the educational experiences of students, and the knowledge of the relationships among the school, community, family, and church during that era will include the significant contributions of the Black church in subsequent conceptual/theoretical frameworks of African American education.

#### Future Research

There can be few more humbling experiences than being entrusted to record a person's life story. This awesome responsibility will guide my considerations as I continue

this research. Each of their lives is worth in-depth study, each a window into the relationships of school, community, family, and church that influenced them beyond Adkin High School.

Like Noblit and Dempsey (1996) who created a theatrical performance of the constructed stories for their study's community, I plan to work with youth from the community in Kinston to retell the story of Adkin High School through creative, artistic representations of drama, music, spoken word, song, art, etc. This is similar to the work that I and other graduate students did with Dr. Mary Stone Hanley (Hanley, Joyner, Beverly, Powers, & Pyne, 2006). Using arts based educational research, this collaborative study created representations of race, social class, gender, age, and other concerns based on twelve narratives of positive and negative educational experiences. I will organize some of the youth in the Kinston community to engage the stories I have collected and the research I have done and encourage them to collect additional stories from Adkin High School students. I plan to use, *A Colored School*, a documentary chronicling the all-Black Second Ward High School in 1941 Charlotte as a model of the segregated school environment that mirrors that of Adkin High School. Using our data, we will create a performance using their talents to accomplish several goals: 1) to learn about local African American history in Kinston and 2) to create a work of art that they will own that honors the educational legacy of their community.

There are other areas of research that I am interested in that grew out of my dissertation research. The Black Catholic Church in Kinston, Our Lady of the Atonement, operated a school for grades K-8 from 1947 to 1969. As one participant who went there noted, "I'm in a Catholic school every day... being indoctrinated towards Catholicism, but

I'm not a Catholic, and they let you know you're not a Catholic... and that only Catholics got to go to heaven." It would be interesting to document the stories of those who attended the Catholic school and their transitions into public school at Adkin High School. The recreation department of Kinston influenced the lives of several of my study participants, and I am interested in chronicling the all-Black swim team founded in 1952, the Holloway Sharks. This story is known by few in the Kinston community and beyond. Certainly, I will return to Kinston College as a research study to answer my initial questions that led me to this study of Adkin High School. How did the United American Free Will Baptist Church establish the secondary coeducational institution Kinston College and what were the educational experiences of those who attended the school?

As mathematics education and policy is my primary career option, I am interested in documenting stories of mathematical success in the segregated classroom and how those successes parlayed individuals into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers and teaching. My intent here is to share those stories with students, teachers, and policymakers as a reminder that Black children have always been capable of excelling in mathematics and science. These stories include the students who took an extra course in mathematics to adequately prepare them for college and others who successfully completed courses in Chemistry and Physics despite inadequate facilities and secondhand books.

### Conclusion

*I am doing this because it is a moral call on my life. This research, this work, this desire to document the story of segregated education is in line with my desire to serve the current generation – to assist students of today – to join those behind me and beside me who recognize the essential vital important need/demand for education. Along with the need for education, I join the movements that view education from a holistic approach – meaning in and out of the classroom. Education of the total being. Intellectual knowledge and knowledge of self combined in such a way that*

*every individual is afforded the opportunity to fulfill his/her life's purpose, dreams, and desires. My Journal entry, July 2005*

The relationships of segregated education at Adkin High School are noteworthy and appropriate for advancing the knowledge of the history of Black secondary education in North Carolina. The stories of the relationships I gathered are similar to my stories of the relationships among school, community, family, and church that I experienced for six years at C.H. Bynum Elementary School. The teachers and other school personnel there nurtured me through their care and concern for my education and for me. Even today, I carry fond memories of those educators that laid the foundation for the degree of educational success I have obtained. These sentiments were expressed by the Adkin High School students who participated in this study. I, too, experienced the relationships among community, family, and church that fostered my sense of self worth. My relationships in the Black church afforded me leadership opportunities and rooted me in the spiritual faith that I have today. So many of the stories and experiences of segregated education mirror my own segregated education stories and experiences.

I do not recall the inequities of resources during my segregated education experiences. I do not remember if I got new books each year, but my books were in good condition and the school's facilities were adequate as I recall. Neither do I recall the inequities of difference plagued some of the study's participants. However, I do recognize that issues of inequity based on differences did exist during segregated education and continue today. My fear is that today's students may not be experiencing the overwhelming positives of relationships that Siddle Walker described to allow them to triumph and reach their highest potential. My goal, like Siddle Walker's, is to provide value to the community

and education at large. Adkin High School and the relationships of segregated education remind us of this fact: It is all about relationships.

## APPENDIX A: Interest Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for speaking with me a few days ago about my research study, “Adkin High and the Relationships of Segregated Education.” I am conducting oral history interviews on the subject of segregated education in the rural South. Specifically, I will examine the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected students who attended the all-Black high school, Adkin High School, in Kinston, North Carolina from 1928-1970. From this, I will examine the role these relationships played in the educational experiences of Adkin High School students.

When we talked, you indicated that you might be willing to be interviewed. To help you decide, please examine the following enclosed items.

- **University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Consent to Participate in a Research Study** – Please read this consent form and note any questions or concerns so we can talk about them. If you agree to the interview, I will ask you to sign and date a consent form.
- **Life History Form** – If you agree to the interview, please complete the brief life history form prior to our interview. You do not need to mail the life history form to me. Just hand it to me at the time of the interview. It will help me to ask informed questions during the interview.
- **Recruitment Flyer** – Please feel free to share this information with other Adkin High School students who may be interested in participating in my research study.

I will contact you in a few days to confirm your receipt of this packet, and find out what you have decided. If you have decided to be in my study, we will arrange the date/time/location of our interview. I will also ask you for names of others who might be interested in talking with me about this study. Thanks so much for your willingness to consider participating, and please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

All the best,

Rita L. Joyner  
919.215.6558  
[rjoyner@email.unc.edu](mailto:rjoyner@email.unc.edu)

Enclosures

## APPENDIX B: Consent Form

### University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Consent to Participate in a Research Study

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**IRB Study # 08-1865**

**Consent Form Version Date:** September 29, 2008

**Title of Study:** Adkin High School and the Relationships of Segregated Education

**Principal Investigator:** Rita L. Joyner

**UNC-Chapel Hill Department:** School of Education

**UNC-Chapel Hill Phone number:** 919.966.7000

**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Carol Malloy

**Funding Source:** Not applicable

**Study Contact telephone number:** 919.215.6558

**Study Contact email:** rjoyner@email.unc.edu

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#### **What are some general things you should know about research studies?**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form. You should ask the researchers named above, or staff members who may assist them, any questions you have about this study at any time.

#### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of this research study is to learn about the relationships and educational experiences of Adkin High School students. I am conducting this research to add to the body of knowledge of segregated education in North Carolina.

You are being asked to be in the study because of your affiliation with Adkin High School during its years of operation, 1928-1970.

#### **How many people will take part in this study?**

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately 10-15 people in this research study.

**How long will your part in this study last?**

If you choose to be in this study, I will conduct at least one interview with you that will last approximately 45 to 90 minutes, depending on how long you want to speak. I expect that I will do no more than two interviews with you.

**What will happen if you take part in the study?**

You and I will talk about your general life history and about the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected your educational experiences at Adkin High School. With your permission, the interview will be recorded on an audio recorder. The length and number of interviews will be determined by both you and me. It is possible that I will include excerpts from this interview in my PhD dissertation and any future articles or books that I publish. In addition, with your consent, the interview I conduct with you may be donated at a later date designated by me (the interviewer) to an archive.

**What are the possible benefits from being in this study?**

Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge. You may not benefit personally from being in this research study. Although this study will give you the chance to relate and tell your experiences of Adkin High School, there will be no financial or personal benefits resulting from this study. Several weeks after your interview, I will give you an audio recording of your interview.

**What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?**

I do not anticipate that you will experience any risks through your participation in this study.

**How will your privacy be protected?**

You and I together will select a private location to conduct the interview. During the interview, you may decline to answer any question for any reason, or terminate the interview at any time. A few weeks after the interview, I will provide you with a transcript of the interview so that you may correct or exclude any of your comments. Also, at any time, you may decide to be identified only with a pseudonym. In addition, you will have complete control over how your interview may be used.

I can assure you that protecting your rights and privacy is very important to me. If you wish, I will maintain your anonymity throughout the interview and in all materials produced from the interview, with no record of your real identity. The audio recorder can be turned off at any point during the interview at your request. You may also choose what you would like me to do with any recordings of you that I have made during the interview, after my study is complete, such as destroying all copies or donating them to an archive. I will ask you about that after we have finished the interview.

Participants can choose whether or not to be identified in any report or publication about this study.

**Will you receive anything for being in this study?**

You will receive an original audio recording of your interview, a copy of the final transcript, and a writing pen for taking part in this study.

**Will it cost you anything to be in this study?**

There will be no costs for being in the study.

**What if you have questions about this study?**

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact the researcher listed on the first page of this form – Rita L. Joyner at 919.215.6558 or [rjoyner@email.unc.edu](mailto:rjoyner@email.unc.edu). You may also contact the researcher’s dissertation advisor Dr. Carol Malloy at 919.962.6607 or [cmalloy@email.unc.edu](mailto:cmalloy@email.unc.edu).

**What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to [IRB\\_subjects@unc.edu](mailto:IRB_subjects@unc.edu).

**Title of Study:** Adkin High School and the Relationships of Segregated Education

**Principal Investigator:** Rita L. Joyner

**Participant's Agreement:**

**Please check all that apply to the interview itself, and please read over the choices that you can make AFTER the interview is completed.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I **Agree** to have this interview recorded and transcribed.

\_\_\_\_\_ You can refer to me by my real name during the interview. I may ask that you use a pseudonym (fake name) when you make the transcript, after I know what has been asked, and what I have said.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please use a pseudonym (fake name) during the interview process and in all written work. I wish to remain **anonymous** in any written work that includes references to this interview.

AFTER the interview, please check your choices about what will happen to your interview recording and transcript after the study is complete.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please change my real name to a pseudonym (fake name) in the transcript.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **Agree** to have this interview and all transcripts taken from it donated to an archive if the interviewer decides to do so at a later date.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **do not agree** to have this interview or transcripts made from it donated to an archive, but I allow the researcher to keep these materials stored securely, without my name, for the amount of time required by the academic journals where the results of this work may be published.

\_\_\_\_\_ I request that upon completion of this project all references to my true identity are **destroyed**.

Note: You will have another opportunity to change your decision about the storage of the recording and final transcript when you receive the original transcript of your interview for editing/approval.

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time.  
I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Research Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Research Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

**APPENDIX C: Life History Form**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Please do NOT provide Name if you choose to remain anonymous)

**Briefly describe your family when you were growing up [parent(s)/guardian(s); sister(s)/brother(s); other members of your household].**

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**Were you born in Kinston?**

\_\_\_ Yes, and I lived in the \_\_\_\_\_ community of Kinston.

\_\_\_ No, I was born in \_\_\_\_\_.

**Where did you attend elementary and junior high school?**

I attended elementary school at \_\_\_\_\_ and junior high school at \_\_\_\_\_.

**What years did you attend Adkin High School?**

I attended Adkin High from \_\_\_\_\_ (year) to \_\_\_\_\_ (year).

**Did you graduate?**

\_\_\_ Yes, I am a member of the Class of \_\_\_\_\_ (year).

\_\_\_ No, I left school in \_\_\_\_\_ (year) because \_\_\_\_\_

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## **APPENDIX D: Recruitment Flyer**

### **Adkin High and the Relationships of Segregated Education** [Ph.D. dissertation research study for UNC-Chapel Hill doctoral student Rita L. Joyner]

**Purpose:** I am conducting oral history interviews on the subject of segregated education in the rural South. Specifically, I will examine the relationships among school, community, family, and church that affected students who attended the all-Black high school, Adkin High School, in Kinston, North Carolina from 1928-1970. From this, I will examine the role these relationships played in the educational experiences of Adkin High School students.

Interviews will last approximately 45 to 90 minutes and, with your permission, will be tape recorded for accuracy. Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no risks or costs associated with participating in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete one initial interview and possibly one follow-up interview. The approximate dates of the study are from October 2008 – December 2008. At the conclusion of the study, the final product will be made available to all interested parties.

If you would like to know more about this research study so you can decide if you might be willing to participate, please contact me at your earliest convenience (see information below). If you prefer, you can tell your fellow Adkin student, who gave you this information, your telephone number to give to me so I can call you. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Rita L. Joyner  
Phone: 919.215.6558  
Email: rjoyner@email.unc.edu

## **APPENDIX E: Interview Questions**

### **Adkin High and the Relationships of Segregated Education**

Tell me about the classes you took at Adkin High. Describe (if any) your participation in athletics, music and the arts, and/or club activities.

What do you recall (if any) of your fondest memories of Adkin High?

What do you recall (if any) of your least favorite memories of Adkin High?

Tell me about the school principal, teachers, and other staff members.

What do you recall (if any) about their interactions with your family (or interactions with other families)?

Describe the relationship (if any) of your family or other families with school personnel.

What do you recall of community participation (if any) in school activities.

What community events (if any) do you recall being held at Adkin High?

What do you recall (if any) of school personnel being involved in community events?

What do you recall (if any) of the role church(es) in the community played in your educational experiences?

What do you recall (if any) of interactions between school and church in your or other students educational experiences at Adkin High?

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