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ANNUAL REPORT
Of The
WIL LOU GRAY
OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL



S. C. STATE ARCHIVE
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STATE ARCHIVE

For the Year Ending June 30, 1980

**Printed Under the Direction of the
State Budget and Control Board**

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OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL



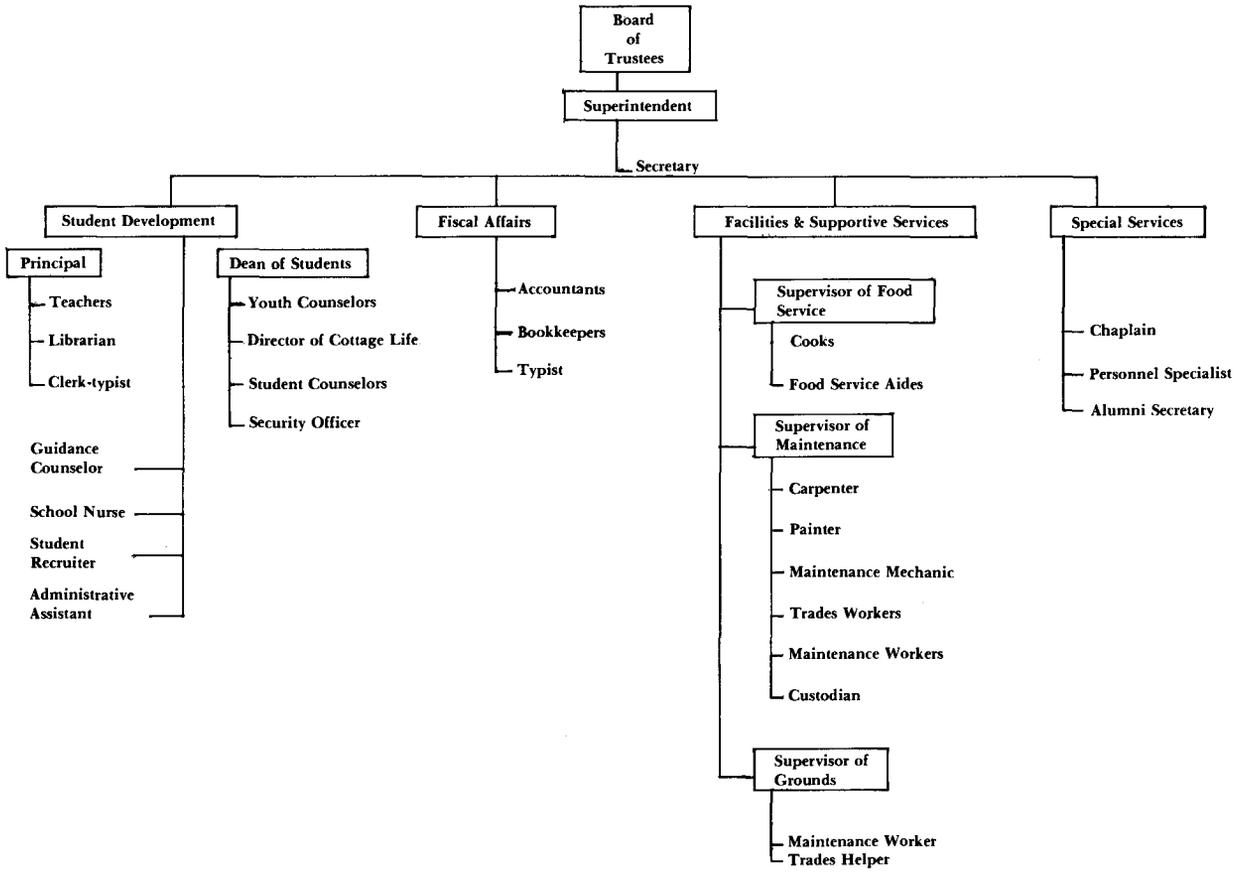
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WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL
ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION CHART



WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

Board of Trustees

The Honorable Richard W. Riley, Governor, Ex-Officio

The Honorable Charlie G. Williams, State Superintendent of Education, Ex-Officio

Mrs. Anne Tilghman Boyce	Marion	July 2, 1983
Dr. Marvin Efron	West Cola.	July 2, 1984
Dr. J. Carlisle Holler	Rock Hill	July 2, 1981
Miss Mary Mack	Charleston	July 2, 1984
Mr. James McClary.....	Columbia	July 2, 1983
Dr. James F. Miles	Clemson	July 2, 1984
The Reverend James B. Mitchell....	Columbia	July 2, 1981
Mr. Clarence S. Rowland	Camden	July 2, 1981
Dr. Louise T. Scott.....	Florence	July 2, 1983
Mr. Karl Segelken	Summerville	July 2, 1984
Dr. M.B. Webb.....	Ridge Spring	July 2, 1981
Mrs. Jack Wilson	Williamston	July 2, 1984

Faculty and Staff

J. Truett Willis	Superintendent
Thelma Bailey	Principal
Eugenia Bechtler	Alumni Secretary
Larry Hoce	Dean of Students
Walter R. Hughes	Supervisor of Maintenance
John W. King	Controller
Gloria Lloyd	Personnel Officer
Lillian Mackey	Supervisor of Food Service
O'Neal Miller	Supervisor of Grounds
Pat G. Smith	Business Manager
William L. Smith	Administrative Assistant

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

The Opportunity School was founded in 1921 by Miss Wil Lou Gray, State Supervisor of Adult Education, as an experiment in adult education. The first session, scheduled for "lay-by-time" so that farm women and girls could attend, opened August 2, 1921, at Tamasee, the mountain school of the Daughters of the American Revolution. It was the first boarding school for women on elementary level. Requirements for admission were that a pupil be no younger than fourteen, be unable to attend public school and have no higher than a fifth grade education. The curriculum at that time included the tools for learning supplemented by emphasis on health habits, good manners, civics, domestic science, and arts and crafts. The faculty consisted of one paid teacher, three volunteers, and several visiting teachers from Winthrop College and the community. Seventeen girls were registered as boarding students for the day school, and nineteen men attended night classes.

The experimental school proved very successful. The following year, larger quarters were sought, and since the state could pay only for teachers, additional means of financing were required. Cooperating with the State Department of Education, Lander College granted use of its facilities. The Methodist Conference and the Baptist Convention each contributed \$300.00 toward operational expenses, and a wide range of supporters of adult education supplied scholarship aid. The mills were especially cooperative, sending students as well as scholarships. Eighty-nine women and girls, ranging from fourteen to fifty-one, and representing thirteen counties attended the 1922 school. There was no school for men.

Erskine College supplied the facilities for the men's sessions beginning with 1923 through 1930. The girls' sessions continued at Lander through 1924. They were located at Anderson College in 1925, 1926, and 1927, and moved to the Women's College at Due West for the sessions of 1928, 1929, and 1930. In 1931 the schools became co-ed at Clemson College.

In 1931, with the support of a \$10,000.00 grant from the Carnegie Foundation, a study was made in "The Learning Ability of Adults." Directed by Dr. W.S. Dray, Dean of Education, Chicago University, and Dr. J.W. Tilton of Yale University, this study, with the use of standardized tests, indicated that adults learn three to nine times faster than children. That year, for the first time, the Opportunity

School awarded seventh grade certificates. Fifty-two students received them.

The school was held at Clemson College from 1931 through 1942, at which time it had to be moved because of war conditions. It was held at Lander in 1943 and 1944, and at Columbia College in 1945.

A new era for adult education began in the early 1940's. In 1941, two Opportunity School students were awarded high school diplomas by an accredited high school which they had not attended. These diplomas were awarded on the basis other than number of units earned. In 1942, the high school testing service was established by the State Department of Education. Two Opportunity School students were the first to earn high school certificates under this program. This program continued to be a boon to those who for a variety of reasons were unable to complete their formal schooling.

These one-month terms of the Opportunity School held over a period of twenty-five years had clearly shown the need for a permanent year-round school. This was further emphasized by returning World War II veterans who were unable to take advantage of the education benefits of the G.I. Bill because there was no boarding institution in South Carolina offering general education for adults on the elementary and secondary levels. Recognizing the pressing need, the Legislature in 1946 granted the request of the State Department of Education for an appropriation to operate the Opportunity School on a year-round basis. Through the efforts of many people, 998 acres and some 200 buildings of the de-activated Columbia Army Air Base were acquired by a quit-claim deed through the War Assets Administration for the joint use of the Opportunity School and the Trade School on a ten-year probationary basis. The school's first session in this permanent home opened January 2, 1947.

Students and staff worked closely together in a pioneer spirit in making the barrack type buildings into an attractive facility. The educational program was developed and expanded to accommodate commuting day and evening students in addition to the boarding students. Special attention was given to the needs of veterans and their families; programs were designed to teach practical arts in everyday living, as well as academics.

Fully satisfied with its utilization, the Federal Government released the property to the South Carolina Budget and Control Board in 1956. In a reallocation of the property several years later, the Budget and Control Board delineated 107 acres as the Opportunity School Campus.

By a legislative act in 1957, the South Carolina Opportunity School was declared a body politic and placed under the management and control of a Board of Trustees.

Modern facilities have replaced the temporary Air Base buildings which served over twenty years. Revising and expanding its programs to meet changing needs, in a homelike atmosphere, the Opportunity School continues its mission of teaching adults.

During the 59 years of service to people, the school has enrolled 26,776 students. Of this number, 1,185 have graduated by passing the high school equivalency test and 31 have earned a standard high school diploma. The school was accredited by the State Department of Education in 1975 and since that time has been given the privilege to award standard high school diplomas to any student who earns 18 or more Carnegie units.

PURPOSES

The school is organized and patterned after the Danish Folk Schools of the nineteenth century. It provides academic and vocational training for out-of-school youth and adults in a good citizenship environment. Each student is placed in each subject area on a level of difficulty commensurate with his achievement level. The teacher-pupil ratio is on a one to seventeen basis providing for individual attention by the teacher to each pupil. The instructional program's purpose is to prepare each student to live a more meaningful life.

LEGAL STATUS

The school is an agency of state government chartered for the purpose of providing out-of-school youth and adults academic and vocational training. It is managed by a Board of Trustees. Ten of the trustees are appointed by the Legislature with each trustee serving for a term of four years. Two of the trustees are appointed by the Alumni Association and each serves a term of four years. The Governor of the State and the State Superintendent of Education are ex-officio members of the board.

FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE SCHOOL

The Budget and Control Board recommended the following organization of programs to effectively administer the total program of the school.

The Administration planned, supervised, and evaluated all facets of

the operation. It prepared the annual budget for all operational needs and pursued its adoption by the Legislature. It revised and brought up-to-date the five year plan for development. It kept the Board of Trustees informed of the day-to-day operation. It performed many assignments as were made by the Board of Trustees and committees of the Board of Trustees.

The Educational program provided academic training ranging in difficulty from low elementary level through high school and vocational training in seven areas. An evening school program was provided for adults in the community who wished to upgrade their communication and computational skills and/or who wished to take some refresher work before attempting the GED.

The Student Service program provided supervision for all residential students during all out of class hours including the weekends.

Support services included food service, which provided three meals daily for seven days each week; maintenance service, which maintained the cleanliness of the buildings and made them comfortable and kept the grounds beautiful; and the finance service, which kept the students' accounts and paid the school's bills.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS FOR JULY 1, 1979—JUNE 30, 1980

The 59th school year was a good one as the following reports prepared by the various department heads will show. Enrollment for the year was comparable with the last several years. It remained rather constant through May. The number of graduates were about the same as for several years. The achievement test results were not available at the time of the writing of this report.

INFIRMARY REPORT

A registered nurse was on duty from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon daily. An average of 13 students were seen each morning for a variety of complaints. Most of the ailments were treated by the nurse. Those of a serious nature were referred to a doctor or a health clinic.

Any illness that required more than a day or two of bed rest was sent home to get more personalized care. A few students did require hospitalization, usually for preexisting maladies.

Students were encouraged by the nurse, with the cooperation of the teachers, to practice good health habits to prevent any serious health problem. There was a very low incidence of influenza seen this year.

Many newspaper clippings were posted to inform the students of the latest health findings. Also, many pamphlets concerning different health problems were available to the students for their personal use.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS

Two alumni affairs were held during the year, an Alumni Winter Affair on December 1, 1979, and an Alumni Luncheon on May 17, 1980. Both affairs were well attended.

The December affair included a business meeting and a tour of the school, followed by a banquet. At the business meeting, the alumni reelected Dr. James F. Miles of Clemson and Karl H. Segelken of Summerville as their representatives on the Board of Trustees; and following custom, voted to provide the school with a photography portrait of the director. The information tour of the school, conducted by field representative George Smith, was provided for non-alumni. Drama and language arts students entertained at the banquet with two puppet productions.

The May luncheon, a joint effort of the alumni office and the Board of Trustees, centered on the honoring of Dr. James Truett

Willis, Director, retiring for health reasons after twelve years of service to the school, and was climaxed with the unveiling of Dr. Willis's portrait, painted by Mrs. Katherine Clark, a former student and teacher.

Two other retiring employees were also honored at the luncheon-- Mrs. Louise C. Erwin, teacher, with twenty-seven years service, and Mrs. Lillian B. Mackey, dietitian, with almost twenty-three years service.

Each year the alumni present a plaque to the "Best All-Around Student" as selected by the faculty. The selection, not having been made at the time of the luncheon, the presentation was made at the end of the school year. The recipient was Richard Lee Sims for school year 1979-1980.

The alumni office continues in its efforts to renew the interest of inactive alumni, to maintain the interest of active alumni, and to develop the interest of recent graduates.

STUDENT RECRUITER

The student recruiter spent 44 weeks of the 52 week year visiting the 46 counties of the state. More than 20,000 miles were traveled and 1,600 contacts were made. Many contacts made out of state are not included in the above.

Speaking engagements were made for such groups as the Santee Baptist Association, Youth Workers Convention, Regional and State Meetings of Juvenile Placement and Aftercare Services and the Department of Youth Services. Four radio stations gave time for discussion about the school. They were in Camden, Cayce, Darlington and Georgetown.

A Foster Fund Program was developed between the school and the Department of Juvenile Placement and Aftercare and the Department of Youth Services.

Fifteen colleges asked the recruiter to speak to their classes of future teachers. The University of S.C. had its future teachers to tour the school.

A bi-monthly news letter went out to 1600 people and organizations such as attendance supervisors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, Employment Security Commission, Department of Social Services, and State legislators.

One hundred eleven applications were received by the Student Recruiter. Of these 79 were enrolled in school.

ACADEMIC REPORT

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School held its Pre-Service Workshop for teachers on Thursday and Friday, August 23-24, 1979. The Staff Handbook was distributed and discussed. Mr. George Smith, our school representative from the State Department of Education, reviewed the South Carolina State school requirements for our academic program.

Assigned duties for teachers and lesson plans were discussed. The importance of confidential information was also discussed concerning our students' evaluations and records.

The entire faculty assisted in the registration of students. They tested all students who entered on August 27-28, 1979; and they also corrected the tests.

All teachers used their preparation and scheduled pre-service time to develop our school curriculum in their individual subject areas.

Three teachers were appointed to serve on our Placement Committee to complete required forms that must be filed on each handicapped student. IEP's were developed on more than 300 of our handicapped students this year.

A special committee was appointed to make a study of our testing program. The California Mental Maturity test was re-placed by the re-revised Beta and Slosson. In addition to the California Tests of Adult Basic Education, the CTBS was added because the CTBS provides test scores in social studies and science as well as language, math, and reading. In the future, students will be scheduled according to all test scores made on each test level. The CTBS is used statewide; therefore, the student can be scheduled using the test scores given on his/her transcript.

Students who advanced to a 10.5 grade level or above on the TABE tests and reached the age of seventeen years or over were also given the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. These students who desired to take the South Carolina High School Equivalency Examination were recommended to do so.

The Adult Performance Level Survival Skills were incorporated in each teacher's daily activities during the school year.

Four students graduated this year with eighteen or more units of credit. Fifty-five students graduated on June 28, 1980.

HEARING IMPAIRED

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School worked in conjunction

with the S.C. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation in providing academic and vocational services to hearing impaired adults in S.C. Under this special program, and within the hearing handicapped resources class, individuals were provided training for the acquisition and/or remediation of basic written language skills, vocabulary development (especially related to daily functioning) and training in manual communication skills. Hearing handicapped students who were endeavoring to pass the GED exam or complete Carnegie units for graduation were also placed in regular classes where they were allowed to work through programmed materials.

In addition to providing financial assistance for most of our hearing handicapped students, the Evaluation and Adjustment Center for the Deaf also provided such services as: evaluation of vocational interests and abilities, vocational counseling, training in skills of daily living, psychological testing, and job placement.

This program served hearing impaired individuals age sixteen and up. These individuals come from oral schools and manual schools, public schools and private schools; they include school dropouts, transferees, graduates, and those who have never attended school. During the 1979-80 school year, there were 39 hearing handicapped students enrolled at the Opportunity School. Of this number, 41% had language levels below fourth grade and 47% were at or above the fourth grade level. In addition, one was untestable and three were unavailable during testing. Eleven students were enrolled part or full time in regular classes of the Opportunity School. One student earned the necessary credits to graduate this June. Five individuals served had not received formal educational services prior to entering the Opportunity School. These students had to be provided with basic manual communication skills while being taught a basic written sight-word vocabulary, as well as being assisted in developing socialization skills related to communication.

Work within the hearing handicapped resource room was individualized so that each student was able to work on improving his language skills, whether it be learning the alphabet, distinguishing between asking or telling sentences, or writing complete sentences. Although the importance of correct written language was stressed throughout this year, it was correlated to information which is essential to persons soon to enter the labor force of our community and state. For example: while working on punctuation, the students were also learning functional vocabulary, such as POISON, DANCE, FLAMMABLE, etc. They worked on developing the skills necessary for following and answering

questions, which are essential to completing job applications and following job instructions.

The goal for this class was to provide support, emphasis and consistency to the information being presented and abilities being developed through the personal-social and work adjustment class provided by V.R.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

The guidance counselor talked individually with approximately 160 students. Some of these developed into counseling relationships. New students were tested every week with the assistance of the librarian.

The guidance counselor served on a testing committee and gathered information from the psychologist at John G. Richards School, the guidance counselor at Birchwood, and the head psychologist for Lexington County School Systems. From this information, a testing report was made that will broaden achievement testing to include the comprehensive basic skills tests. This test is widely used in schools throughout the state. It will be used as prepost testing to determine the extent students have achieved skills during the year. Group IQ's are being abandoned. Individual tests will be given any student needing tests not given by Vocational Rehabilitation or in relation to defining handicaps, or until such can be done.

A career emphasis was held in January and included general conferences on getting and holding jobs, as well as getting into four years college or technical college. These careers were touched on: auto-mechanics, auto body repair, air conditioning and refrigeration repair, criminal justice, allied health, business and office occupations, carpentry, and masonry.

Due to the usual problems with drugs, a workshop was held in October to involve all students. Workers from drug centers and agencies in this area led workshops on drugs during the school day. They then met with the faculty for questions and answers.

A new computer was installed during the summer that is hooked up to the Employment Security Commission. The Guidance counselor used this machine to secure information on colleges, certain vocations, and job openings throughout the state. Print-outs of information were given to many students, along with vocational counseling.

The guidance counselor was able to engage the assistance of six

other counselors from Eureka Center, the Bosom, and the Lexington-Richland County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council. Students were referred to these counselors for individual and group counseling.

"The Handicapped are Beautiful" emphasis was planned by the guidance counselor and the teacher of the speech and hearing impaired. Conferences were held at the University of South Carolina that ultimately led to Dr. Minifie of University of South Carolina teaching to the staff a course called "Mainstreaming the Handicapped." This was a one semester graduate course taught at the Opportunity School.

The guidance counselor consulted with the staff, some parents, other agencies, and referred students to sources of help throughout the school year. She attended a number of training workshops provided by the State Department of Mental Health. As senior advisor, she handled invitations to graduation, ordering of rings, and raising money to take seniors to a steak house. She assisted with trips to Sesqui-Centennial State Park and Camp Barstow.

The ACT Career Planning Tests from the State Department of Education were again administered to students not sponsored by Vocational Rehabilitation. Results were explained after they were scored and a printout was available.

STUDENT SERVICES

Students services included those activities provided during the out-of-class hours and on the weekends including dormitory life. The services were provided by a full-time staff of thirteen people on duty from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. The Dean of Students was on call until 8:00 a.m. each day to handle any emergency that might occur during the night hours.

Many different activities were offered for students to participate in to try and combat drug abuse among the school population, and to assist the students in social and personal adjustment.

The Explorer Scouts Program was a tremendous asset to the school this year. The Explorers served as ushers for all home Carolina football games. Other activities included fieldtrips, hikes, campouts, and the Explorer Olympics where one of our students won a gold medal. The basketball team finished fourth in the Explorer tournament.

Several area churches worked with students during the year. They were Forest Drive Baptist Church, Harbor Baptist Church, and Platt

Springs United Methodist Church. Habor Baptist along with Forest Drive Baptist provided transportation on Sundays to church.

We received much help from community support programs such as the South Carolina Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Columbia Area Mental Health, Clemson Extension Service, Lexington County Health Department, Planned Parenthood, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

A senior seminar that involved independent living skills was made available to any student who was close to graduation. The course consisted of recreation, home skills, finance and bookkeeping. Several different agencies helped with this program. Richard Bell, assistant football coach at Carolina, was a speaker in this program. Clemson Extension provided help also.

Several field trips were planned by the afternoon staff. Trips to the Ringling Brother Circus, the South Carolina State Fair, Carolina Baseball games, Carolina football games, plays put on by the Theatrical Department at Carolina and swimming trips. The highlight of the year was a trip to the State House. Several students met and talked with Richard W. Riley, Governor of South Carolina. Later the same day these students were introduced on the floor of the senate.

Several special programs were put on by students with the help of staff members. "Skit Night," fashion shows, talent night, Christmas Programs, Christmas dance, Valentine dance, and disco were some of the special programs featured for the students. Much time and hard work were put into these programs.

The recreation program engaged the students in a wide variety of recreation activities such as: softball, volleyball, basketball, shuffleboard, fieldhockey, frisbee, billiards, archery, table tennis, tennis, bumper pool football, paddleball and other new games. Tournaments were offered on a bi-weekly basis for many of these sports.

CHAPLAIN

The Chaplain conducted chapel services every Sunday when students were on campus, and conducted Vespers on the Thursday when no chapel assembly was held that particular week. (This represents about 50% of the Thursdays.) He, also, led prayers each weekday morning at the beginning of the school's activities for those students and staff members who cared to participate. This was done by way of the public address system. He, also, provided pastoral care

to students and staff members who were in hospital, and/or any other sort of crisis and assisted students and staff members in planning and preparing chapel assembly programs. The chaplain engaged in numerous counseling sessions with students on an individual or small group basis. He did some counseling with staff members, too.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The support services included food service, maintenance service, and grounds. These services were under the supervision of a Director of Supportive Services with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

The food service was provided by a staff of nine people under the direction of a food service supervisor. The supervisor graduated from the Opportunity School in 1957 and had taken several courses in food management, and nutrition. She has been awarded a certificate in food service by Richland Technical School. The food service provided more than 75,000 meals including special meals and banquets to the student body, staff, and visitors. These were provided at a cost of \$166,718.00.

The maintenance service was provided by a staff of ten people under the direction of a maintenance supervisor. The staff maintained cleanliness and upkeep on twelve service buildings and eleven residences. The cafeteria and gymnasium were completely refurbished to nearly their original state during the year. In addition, a new tennis court was constructed to add to our plant facility. The maintenance of the grounds was provided by the grounds superintendent who also taught a course in horticulture. He had two fulltime assistants to help him maintain 100 acres of campus. Total cost of maintenance service was \$225,486.00.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Training was offered in the areas as listed below:

	Number Enrolled	Certificates Awarded	Employed
Building Construction	5	5	*
Auto Mechanics	1	1	*
Janitorial Services	2	2	*
Industrial Sewing	5	5	*
Child Care	6	6	*
Nursing	14	14	9
Food Service	10	10	*
Horticulture	3	3	*
Distributive Education	12	12	*
Drivers Education	9	9	*

*These people are still enrolled in school

FINANCIAL STATEMENT*
1979-80

REVENUE	
SOURCE	
STATE APPROPRIATIONS	\$1,077,488
FEDERAL FUNDS	148,595
INSTITUTIONAL	<u>200,510</u>
	1,426,593
EXPENDITURE	
DEPARTMENT	
ADMINISTRATION	214,591
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	610,242
STUDENT SERVICES	147,325
SUPPORT SERVICES	399,795
OTHER	<u>37,350</u>
	1,409,303

*** Note to Financial Statement**

The figures used are unaudited and include a projection for the month of June 1980.