

# How Blacks Were Recruited To Orchard Ridge

## And How They Fared In Suburbia

By DENNIS L. PAJOT

Black students can be recruited to the college campus successfully, both for the students and for the college.

It's being proven in Observerland at Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland County Community College. And the proof is coming from a group of recruits whom few would have considered college material.

Credit is due in largest part to the top administrator on the campus for the past two years. Provost Donald Godbold, who is also black. Dr. Godbold's interests, experience, education and ideas are especially suited to the purpose and directly related to his heritage.

Now that he is gone, as of July 1, to a similar post on a central city campus in Denver, further evidence will be gained as to whether it takes a special kind of person.

TWO YEARS AGO Dr. Godbold, who asks that even casual visitors call him "Don," gained approval of a program that brought 47 youngsters to the campus by bus from the inner city of Detroit.

All were educationally deficient for acceptance into most colleges. Most were classified as "culturally deprived," in educator's jargon, compared to the average youth's preparation for participation in the American way of life.

Today one of the 47 is president of the campus student government, and another is president of the Association of Black Students.

They are among 23 who took associate degrees from the college this spring and who will have a good chance of completing final degree work at Michigan State University.

Nine others are expected to complete requirements for job placement.

That's 32 out of 47 "recruits." Who knows how many more if recruited, might overcome the odds?

DR. GODBOLD considered recruitment of and assistance to the disadvantaged, black or white, as his major concern. He sees it as a means for the college to be more "relevant" to the needs of the community.

The 47 were brought to Orchard Ridge under a "Project 50" plan. Dr. Godbold and former CC public relations officer Mitchell Tendler canvassed foundations, churches, businesses, Panhellenic groups, faculty and students, raised \$22,000, and provided all-important bus transportation for the first two years.



DR. GODBOLD: "I think the racial attitudes of Farmington are... well, they are very conservative."

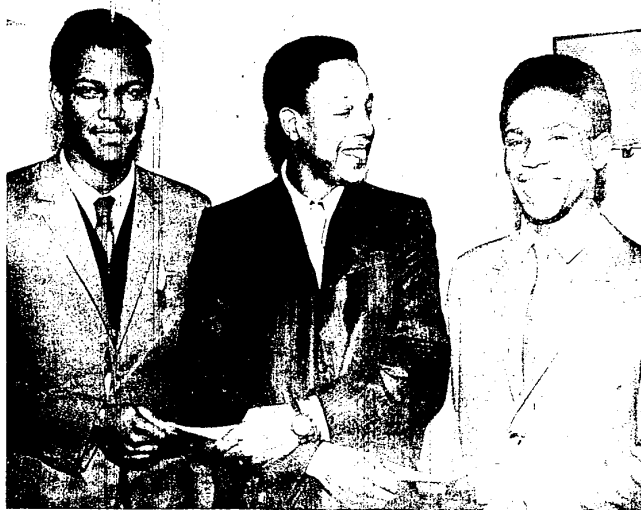
The students came from Detroit rather than from the college service area of Oakland County because there was not time to identify the needy. A federally supported agency had already done this identification in Detroit.

As an on-going service Dr. Godbold envisioned a stepped-up recruitment program, financial aids and possibly a mobile counseling unit to "talk to students on the street." Sufficient salesmanship and program design will bring in students who might otherwise pass up college, he believes.

"Project 50" alone isn't responsible for the high percentage of black students attending OCC.

OF 5,370 STUDENTS enrolled at Orchard Ridge last fall, more than 400 were black, or nearly 8%. Dr. Godbold said this is comparable to the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. In his first year on campus, there were only 15 black students.

Total black enrollment at three OCC campuses in 1969-70 was 676. This despite the fact that it costs each student attending Orchard



BLACK RECRUITS -- Brothers Robert (left) and John Williams (right), sons of former Republic of New Africa leader Robert F. Williams, each received \$250 scholarships to attend OCC's Orchard Ridge campus. Presenting the checks is Paul Williams, former member of the Temp-

Ridge from the central city of Detroit about \$2 per day in transportation and there is no public transit system.

"They hitchhike," said Dr. Godbold. "They have car pools."

Orchard Ridge attracted about 1,200 students of its 5,370 from out of county last year. It has a professional staff of 135 persons, 116 of whom are instructors, 13 counselors and three librarians. There are nine black persons among these, six -- six instructors and three counselors.

Dr. Godbold was not the first black administrator, although he was the first to climb so high in the administration. He came to Orchard Ridge in the fall of 1967 and was dean of students the first year.

First black administrator was Mrs. Louise Childs, associate dean of women, who helped establish two learning resource centers for the college. Today she is with Macomb Community College.

"I THINK THE RACIAL attitudes of Farmington are... well, they are very conservative; there's no doubt about it," said Dr. Godbold.

"I think you have a lot of good Christian people, but it's the same old white America thing: the flag, and apple pie and the like."

"I don't think it's the kind of community that would take a stand against these kinds of inequities right now. There are individuals who will, but they will not do so readily because they're concerned about neighbors and their relationships in the community."

Dr. Godbold tested every word before uttering it. Far from a flippant militant, this black man had a position of responsibility in the very community he was speaking of.

INTENSE, PRESSING spread fingers against spread fingers, gripping chair arms smoothing trousers, leaning back and hunching forward, he volunteered much more than was sought.

His greeting constantly echoed, "This is an honor. I've never been interviewed by the newspapers before."

He recalled one incident in which a fuss had been raised when a black person used a Farmington condominium swimming pool.

"But I do feel the community was visibly shaken by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. We held meetings on campus. People invited us into their homes after the meetings, discussed how black and white people could get along together. They explained how they moved out here because they wanted more space, the property was cheap, or it was too far to drive to work."

"I mean, the usual kind of things."

"There's been no carryover from that. I think their consciences were scorched. Here is a man who preached peace, equality, brotherhood, Christianity. Gunned down by an apparently paid assassin."

"Most may be personally committed to fair play and justice to black people, but it's on an 'I know you well' and not on the basis that they want to improve the lot of black people."

"I think this institution has its racist side, but it has not gotten to the point where it has caused conflict and confrontation. It's not bad. For the most part it's good."

"I'D LIKE THE COLLEGE to become more relevant to needs of the community. There is more we could do in the area of working with the disadvantaged..."

"There should be a more concerted effort to find out from the community what it needs. The only way is to have persons on the staff whose job it is to interrelate with the community, not just as a shot-in-the-dark, sometime thing, but actually to get in where the action is."

tations singing group. An OCC news release related the lads' rich background, including "that they had graduated from high school in Peking and recently returned from Cuba. (OCC photo)

"If we could get more of the community to the campus... They should feel free to saunter around the campus. This college should be like a community park in a way."

On moratoriums, such as those staged during October and November in protest of the Vietnam war, Dr. Godbold had two thoughts.

The first: "I feel when anyone feels an issue, such as Vietnam, is not right, he ought to be able to speak out. I certainly feel I've ought to be able to as an individual."

His second: "They (the parents condemning student protestors) wouldn't want their kids to be any different from kids everywhere else. We realize only a small segment of kids do these things. We as administrators, working with these youngsters, have to get involved with them on such a basis as to keep their respect and yet not violate any of our responsibilities to the community."

And Dr. Godbold had some ideas in the realms of curriculum, but they don't seem very relevant now that he has gone.

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE MALL

SEMI-ANNUAL  
ANTIQUES SHOW  
JULY 13-18

all antiques on displays are  
for sale • 39 dealers

Hear Nate Randall of Grinnell  
on his new  
MAGIC MUSICAL MACHINE  
SATURDAY JULY 11-JULY 18  
SATURDAYS 11 a.m. - 2:47 p.m.  
WEEKDAYS 12 noon-7 p.m.

You've never heard a musical instrument like this. Let Nate show you how two fingers can make a whole band.

\*\*\*\*\*

CHILDREN'S MOVIE  
SHOW

Special cartoon and children's programs at Cinema 1 from 10 a.m. until noon on Thursdays. Open to all children 12 and under.

25¢

OPEN EVERY EVENING  
'til 9 p.m.

Meet You  
At The Mall

There's always something going on at...

LIVONIA MALL  
7 MILE AT MIDDLEBURY  
7 MILE AT MIDDLEBURY



ORCHARD RIDGE CAMPUS: "If we could get more of the community to the campus... They should feel free

to saunter around... This college should be like a community park, in a way." -- Dr. Godbold