When I finished my first interview with Mr. James Mitchell, I asked him if he knew anyone from his class that I could interview. He gave me the name of Mr. Greg Carter. Mr. Mitchell told me Mr. Carter worked for Allstate and was personable. On Tuesday, November 6, I called Mr. Carter’s office. I told him about the project and asked him if he was willing to give an interview. He immediately said yes and we set a date and time for the interview.

Tuesday, November 8, 2001, at 4:00 in the afternoon, I traveled down Charles Boulevard looking for the office. In a small complex, there stood a small blue house. The house was converted into office space; the building had a square Allstate sign hanging in the front of the building. As I walked through the door, I was immediately struck by the small size of the front room. In the room was a secretary with an elderly man sitting across from her desk. The secretary asked if she could help me, I told her I had an appointment with Mr. Carter. Her eye’s glanced towards an office, I followed her gaze and saw a partially opened door. I could see two people in the small office having a
conversation. The secretary directed me towards an empty seat, assuring me she would
tell Mr. Carter I was there.

A woman left the office I had identified as Mr. Carter's and the secretary directed
me to walk in the office. Mr. Carter sat at his desk with a small computer and mounds of
paperwork. I introduced myself and he seemed excited to see me. I told him how
pleased I was that he agreed to the interview and the great contribution to oral history. I
placed the recorder on a stack of papers in front of him and took a seat in the chair across
from his desk. I then began my interview with Mr. Carter.
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East Carolina University

Oral History Project: East Carolina University Alumni

**Narrator:** Danele' Williams

**Interviewer:** Greg Carter

**Place:** Allstate Insurance Companies
Charles St., Greenville, N.C.

**Date:** November 8, 2001

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<th>Initials, Side, Counter No.</th>
<th>Topic of Discussion</th>
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<td>GC 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC 1 003</td>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Born in Stedman, NC., eight miles from Fayetteville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC 1 004</td>
<td>Type of Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Growing up in Stedman, it was an agrarian community. The primary occupation was people working on farms. The many products included tobacco, soybeans, and corn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC 1 006</td>
<td>Surrounding City</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fayetteville was the closest magnet city. It drew people from Cumberland County, Harnett County, Hoke County, Southern Pines, and Sanford.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC 1 010</td>
<td>Carter's Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He was raised around tobacco fields. He picked tobacco as a child and drove a tractor when he was nine years old. Wanted to go to college so he could stay off a tractor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC 1 012</td>
<td>He was born 1952</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC 1 013</td>
<td>Parents Occupations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His mother was a schoolteacher. His father farmed and repaired air-conditioners.</td>
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</table>
Parents Education
His mother graduated from Fayetteville State College. His father had a fourth grade education.

The area was segregated

High School integration
Carter’s high school was integrated in 1968 and consolidated in 1970 of his last year of high school.

He attended a predominately black school through the ninth grade. He voluntarily went to an integrated high school in tenth grade.

What is a Consolidated School
Consolidated school were composed of all the school from the area turned into one large school.

The biggest changes between the integrated and segregated school was the number of people he did not know.

He played football, which helped him make friends.

Ten to fifteen male athletes transferred over to the integrated school.

Influences in High School
A chemistry teacher encouraged him to come to East Carolina. The teacher taught him about chemistry and about life.

His parents wanted him to go to college, as long as it was affordable.

Why Carter Didn’t Go to an Historically Black College
The reason he did not go to a historically black college because he was not familiar with the black schools. Fayetteville State was the closest school, but he did not want to stay so close to home.

His Early Experiences at ECU
There were only fifty-two blacks when he got to ECU. There was closeness, but there was also the black elite. Some blacks felt that they were very smart to be able to attend ECU, and were arrogant. The freshman class he was in was not like that, and were considered thugs, because they were rowdy.
Tensions Between Early Black Students and the Second Wave
There was tension between the elite older black and the young Freshman's because they did not honor their eliteness. The younger students did not follow the pattern the older students set and went their own way.

Early Influence in College
There were influential blacks that became the early integrators and they paid their dues. The good influences included Ernie Minor, Caroline Holliway, Johnny Williams, they showed intelligence but did not come off as elite. They guided the freshmen, more then the elite crowd.

Problems with a Professor
As a freshman he was in control of his day, he was forced to take care of himself. The biggest problem he ever had with an English professor was his freshman year. The professor was on probation for failing to many students. Carter turned in a good paper to the professor, she marked it down to a C-, and she told him it was A information. Carter felt he should have been given the opportunity to fix it.

ECU was on the three-quarters systems back then.

The Technology Teachers Accepted African-Americans
He majored in industrial technology with a lot of blue collar teachers who did not wear suits and ties. The teachers worked with heads and their hand. Carter felt the teachers might have been open to African-Americans, than there intellectual counterparts.

Carter's Major in College and Transition into College
Majored in industrial technology and minored in history. History came easy to him and he got good grades. He was accustom to the small classes and not the big lecture classes. He found the lectures very intimidating.

Leo Jenkins meant nothing to his day-to-day life at ECU
He lived on the Hill, in Jones dormitory, most of the men lived on the Hill.

Most of the campus was on the circle, of Wright student union.
He enrolled at ECU in 1970.

What He did in His Spare Time
He played cards and pool during his spare time. He also liked Mae West and Bogart.

The Party Life at ECU
He became a party animal his sophomore and junior years. His nickname in school was “Jay”. Everyone knew to ask “Jay” about the parties. The start of a new quarter everyone had money, and he could raise $250 for the party. They would party at the bottom of Belk dorm. Fridays and Saturday, the white kids knew the black students were having a party. They would start at 8:30 pm, until the police or a dorm manager said it was time to end. He would bring a stereo and music and everybody had a good time.

The Wright Building Student Center
The card room was on the second floor of the Wright building. They also had a pool table and a snack bar, close to the bookstore.

Fraternities on Campus
He was a charter member of Alpha Phi Alpha, the first black fraternity. They were the first blacks from ECU not to appear on television for something bad. They had a going over [ceremony welcoming them to the frat] party and they participated in the homecoming activities. Other Black frats came; they included the Delta, the AKA’s, and the Omegas, the main four.

Activities with SOULS
He was a member of SOULS. It was the first activist group, but it was a fledgling group without advisors. The group needed to be kept on track and they lacked discipline.

The Confederate Flag and Souls
SOULS did keep a resistance. The White students at the time liked to wave Confederate flags, and SOULS made them disappear.

Physical Altercations between White and Black Students
Karen Holliway’s boyfriend was at a homecoming football game, and the white student president of the SGA was waving the Confederate flag. Karen’s boyfriend took it from the white student; there was a scuffle, and the school made the boyfriend sit out a week. As time passed there were fewer Confederate flags.
The clubs downtown did not play a lot of black music.

He participated in voter registration drives and attended church in the black community. The black community would bring issues to them and they would try to help, but it was hard to get transportation.

He did go to the clubs in the black community occasionally, but often it would get territorial.

Dates were hard to get if you were a freshman. The freshman girls would bring their little sisters or cousins for the guys to date.

He would take his dates to a campus movies or go downtown to movies.

ECU treatment of Blacks was summed up like this: Life is what you make it. If you believe you are somebody and you will not be oppressed then you will not. You can overcome anything. The group he was with knew they were on a mission to succeed.

African-Americans were more together when he was in school, today's blacks are not together. Today's students need to keep in mind that they are in the minority, and they need support beyond the house.

The Alpha was important because it was one of the main social outlets.

There was a good mix of guys on sports teams and the regular student body. They did not separate themselves from everyone else. The most separated person was Carl Lester, because he was married. Carl Lester was the black voice of the Pirates on the radio.

On weekends, he would visit the predominately black schools, such as, Central, Shaw and St. Augustine.
There was a different culture at Black school then at ECU. However, they were looking for girls for the most part.

He would not wish that anything were different about his experience.

ECU was the Right Fit for Him
His wife went to a predominately black school and he does not feel her experience was any better then his. He found his niche here and made the best out of it. He made true friends that made him a better person. He does not like to hang on to regrets.

Keeping Friends For Life
He still keeps in touch with old classmates, and sees them at Homecoming.

He goes back three or four times a year for sporting events.

He is not in any alumni chapters but does support the Industrial Art School

Carter’s Path After Graduation
When he graduated the economy was bad and there were not jobs in industry. He then worked as a credit adjuster, in Richmond VA. He came back to NC in 1981 and worked for Allstate.
Dear Mr. Carter,

Thank you for sharing your wonderful story, I have gained valuable insight into what life was like for you at East Carolina University. Your story will be placed in the Joyner Library in the East Carolina Manuscript Collections, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, 27858. This transcription will serve as a learning tool for students for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Danele' Williams
Graduate Student, East Carolina University