

THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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GRADUATE PROGRAMS
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GENERAL INFORMATION

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

Historical Statement

The history of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is one that can best be told by examining the University's leaders – people who believed in North Carolina A&T. These were leaders who believed not in what A&T was, but what A&T could be. People who believed that making a strong A&T was good for the nation. People who believed that A&T had a responsibility and an obligation to mold and shape tomorrow's thinkers, doers and leaders. This is North Carolina A&T.

A&T was established as a "mechanical college" for the "Colored Race" under the Second Morrill Act, passed by the United States Congress on August 30, 1890. The First Morrill Act, passed in 1862 and also known as the Land Grant College Act, ceded land to each state to establish institutions of higher learning to educate people primarily in agriculture, home economics and mechanical arts. A&T and the other 1890 land-grant institutions were created by the Second Morrill Act, which expanded the system of land-grant colleges and universities to include an historically black institution in those states where segregation denied minorities' access to the landgrant institution established by the First Morrill Act.

So as not to forfeit federal money for A. and M. College (now North Carolina State University) the North Carolina General Assembly created a college for its black citizens as an annex of Shaw University in Raleigh. On March 9, 1891, the General Assembly established A. and M. College for the Colored Race and sought a permanent home. The Board of Trustees, whose members performed the duties of the president, made it known that they were looking for a permanent site for the college. Six North Carolina cities, including Greensboro, made a bid for A. and M. The trustees selected Greensboro based on a proposal promising 14 acres of land and \$11,000 in cash to be used for building and organizing the A. and M. College.

Once the location was established, Dr. John O. Crosby was named as the college's first president, serving from 1892 to 1896. Immediately after taking the role as president, he designed the administration building, which housed all campus activities, and made the first bricks used to construct the building.

Crosby's tenure was difficult. He not only had to build a college, but also had to canvass the state and publicize its advantages to people who felt that agriculture and mechanical arts didn't require a college education and that such skills would result in second-class citizenship for black people.

Despite the challenges, Crosby established two academic departments and admitted the college's first female students in 1893. They remained until 1901 and were not admitted again until 1928. Crosby left A. and M. College in 1896 and returned to Salisbury to manage what has now become Livingstone College.

Crosby's work paved the way for the college's second president, Dr. James B. Dudley in 1896. Dudley, a Wilmington native, who came to A. and M. first as a member of the Board of Trustees, was elected treasurer and then named president. He started his tenure with 58 students who lived in one dormitory. The college at that time had eight teachers and one instructional building. Dudley's first order of business was to bring cohesiveness to the college and to champion A. and M. across the state.

As a result of his hard work, the college grew to 476 students, 13 buildings and 74 more acres were purchased. The college also owned a 100-acre farm. In 1915, the name of the college became The Agricultural and Technical College of North Carolina by an act of the N.C. General Assembly.

Dudley's wife, Susie Wright Sampson Dudley, is credited with writing the words to the A&T Alma Mater. On April 4, 1925, after serving as the president for 29 years, Dudley died at his home, the Magnolias, which was located on Dudley Street. He was considered a lover of students, a great leader and a grand teacher.

Dr. Ferdinand Douglass Bluford was the college's third president, having previously served as professor of English, dean and vice president. Under his guidance, A&T developed from a small land-grant college to one of the nation's most important African American colleges and moved A. and M.'s North Carolina Department of Education's ranking from a "D" to an "A." The campus continued to grow and enrollment increased to 4,783 with students coming from across the state, neighboring states, the District of Columbia and four foreign countries. Faculty and staff grew to 230 members and six schools – agriculture, education and general studies, engineering, nursing, graduate and the technical institute.

Bluford remained at the school until his death in 1955, when Dr. Warmoth Thomas Gibbs, who had worked with Bluford for 30 years, became the fourth president.

A&T experienced phenomenal growth during the Gibbs years, 1955-1960. The college acquired land to extend the main campus to Market and Dudley streets, the guidance center became a separate department, a placement office was established, athletics flourished, and the college gained full acceptance from the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

On February 1, 1960, one of the most dramatic events during the Gibbs administration occurred when four freshmen students – Ezell Blair Jr. (Jabreel Khazan), Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil and David Richmond – sat down at a Greensboro lunch counter and launched what has become known as the start of the sit-in movement. The Gibbs years are known as the college’s greatest developmental era to this point. Gibbs, who was named president emeritus in 1960, died at the age of 101 in 1993.

Dr. Samuel Proctor was only 39 when he became the college’s fifth president in 1960. Although his tenure was brief, 1960-64, he is credited with creating new positions and making additions to the physical plant. Proctor was called to serve as a Peace Corps Director in Nigeria in 1962. He returned to A&T in 1963, but resigned in 1964 to return to the Peace Corps.

With Proctor’s departure, the college named Dr. Lewis C. Dowdy president in 1964, and reaffirmed him as chancellor in 1972. That same year, A& T became a constituent member of the University of North Carolina and the name was changed to North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

Under Dowdy’s leadership the university experienced its greatest period of growth. He reorganized instruction, creating the schools of education, business and economics, and the college of arts and sciences. There was an expansion of four academic buildings, a new gymnasium and a new football stadium.

After serving the university as president/chancellor, faculty member and dean for over 21 years, Dowdy resigned in 1980. He died on December 17, 2000. Dowdy was followed by Dr. Cleon Franklin Thompson, who served as interim chancellor from 1980-81.

In 1981, Dr. Edward Bernard Fort was named chancellor and held that post until his retirement in 1999. Under Fort’s leadership, A&T initiated more than 30 new academic programs, awarded its first doctorate degrees, completed more than \$50 million in new construction, expanded enrollment, and moved to a position of global recognition. Since his retirement, Fort remains at the university as a professor and chancellor emeritus.

Dr. James Carmichael Renick joined the campus in 1999 as its ninth chancellor. Renick’s tenure featured record -breaking enrollment in graduate and undergraduate programs; sponsored research that elevated A&T as the UNC system’s third-ranking university; phenomenal growth in the university’s physical plant; and collaborated in the development of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum, site of the birth of the sitin movement that fomented at A&T in 1960. Dr. Renick left the university in 2006 for a national education position.

Dr. Lloyd “Vic” Hackley served as interim chancellor in 2006 and Dr. Stanley Battle was named chancellor in 2007.

Dr. Battle joins a long line of distinguished university leaders who have moved A&T from a small, land-grant college to an international university with a reputation of graduating the most minority engineers, one of the largest producers of African American certified public accountants, and, true to its heritage, home to the largest agricultural school of any historically black college or university and the second largest producer of minority agricultural graduates.

This is the A&T we believe in.

MISSION, PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY

MISSION STATEMENT

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is a public, doctoral/research intensive, land-grant University committed to fulfilling its fundamental purposes through exemplary undergraduate and graduate instruction, scholarly and creative research, and effective public service. The University offers degree programs at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels. As one of North Carolina’s three engineering colleges, the University offers Ph.D. programs in engineering, as well as two interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs in Leadership Studies and Energy and Environmental Studies. Basic and applied research is conducted by faculty and students in eight research clusters: Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology, Computational Science and Engineering, Public Health, Biotechnology and Biosciences, Leadership and Community Development, Information Technology, Transportation and Logistics, and Agriculture, Energy and Environment.

VISION STATEMENT

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is a learner-centered community that develops and preserves intellectual capital through interdisciplinary learning, discovery, engagement, and operational excellence.