Academic Excellence
and
Civil Rights Era
1965 - 1969


Obie McKenzie - 1967-1966


William Choctaw - 1968 - 1969
Levi Watkins, Jr.
President

Dorothy Grandberry
Vice-President
Election Activities

Candidate for SC Prexy, Levi Watkins, espouses promises.

"The Winner!" Student Council President elect is carried on the shoulders of some of his followers and well-wishers.
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Student Council
Obie McKenzie 1966-1967

David Rutledge- Vice-President,
Obie McKenzie - President
James V. Montgomery 1967-1968

Ollis Douglas, Vice-President
James Montgomery-President
Sylvia Easterling, Ms TSU
Leadership
William Choctaw 1968 - 1969
William Martin 1970-1971
Fred Jackson
1981-1982
My Dear Family:

"Some Traditions are Forever."

In the summer of 1986 I doodled those words on a legal pad in my then new SGA office. I made them the theme for what I hoped would be the year of the rekindling of many of the hopes and dreams of the black people who make up our TSU family and have been fighting the American god of racism for 75 long years. No longer would our students be labeled substandard and "not-citically identifiable." No longer would we listen to blacks who dared tell us to be quiet and suffer the indignities that were so easy to succumb to. We would dare to dream.

I had no idea how much of a reality we would make it become.

My administration had spent long hours gathering our facts. We knew that 50% of all black Tennessee students graduate from TSU although only 15% go to white schools. We knew that the racist legal minds that wanted TSU to "lose its black identity" wanted the same for all public black institutions. We were the test case, the first battleground — the lead domino. If we fell then Grumbling, Southern — all would die a quicker death.

As the year progressed we built and sustained a two-pronged attack. To educate our family to see just how important our existence as a black institution is, we brought back scores of TSU customs. We prayed at chapel; we laughed and cried at players guild programs and Mr. TSU pageants; we argued and then sang our alma mater at countless assemblies, educational forums and mass meetings; we danced at the cafeteria; in short, we did the things our TSU forefathers had done and realized the magic that a black college can bring.

To educate our ignorant brothers and sisters on the outside we danced before the public eye as no group had ever done. We marched by the hundreds to protest our victimization. We entered alliances with ministers, politicians and alumni and educated them as we sought to help fight our battle. Our images and ideas were flying across the country via the leading television shows, radio programs and newspapers as we took our message to the media. Every event became political — whether it was a basketball game where we protested the prostitution of the black athlete at predominantly white schools or a pop rally where we chastised "Uncle Tom" black faculty for their help in giving our school away. We dared to publicly endorse a candidate for Governor — and we discussed our concerns in his office regularly after he was elected.

As the years roll on and Tennessee State still stands as a bastion of black higher education, those who take note of such things will reflect on our efforts and they will be moved. Perhaps they will reflect on me as a brash young captain whose fervor carried him to the brink of disaster, but I think not. Instead, I believe that they will tell their young that at Tennessee State University, back pride and determination are traditions and "Some traditions are Forever."

I Love You All,

Gregory E. Carr
President
1986-87 S.G.A.

"The Wait Is Over — The Excitement Is Back!"

Beginning in the summer of 1986 with activities such as the "Clean Up The Campus Day," the 1986-87 Student Government Association began to fulfill SGA President Greg Carr's promise that "The Wait is Over — The Excitement is Back!" The SGA drew state and nationwide attention through activities such as "The Old School Homecoming Week," "The First Annual Is It Live Week," and a historic march to the state capitol to protest Tennessee's assault on TSU's black identity.

A homecoming concert, spirit bonfires, church services, on campus parties, educational sessions and other programs brought the excitement back to TSU. National leaders such as Jesse Jackson came to the students' call and President Carr granted interviews to such media representatives as the "Today Show," "CBS News, "USA Today," the National Black Network, local and state newspapers and television in order to show that TSU's black heritage was a tradition and that, at TSU, that tradition is forever!

Thanks to the tireless work of the student body, the 1986-87 Student Government Association was successful in engineering the most spectacular rebirth of black pride and spirit in the 75 year history of Tennessee State University. "The Excitement is Back!"