On behalf of the beautiful Black Community of both UNCW and Wilmington, I welcome you to our campus and city! We have been awaiting your arrival to our community and we hope that our correspondence will help to deepen your connection with the over 800+ black students of UNCW, 40+ black faculty and staff of UNCW, and 24,000 black residents of Wilmington and the surrounding community. There is much to learn and do here in this university by the sea. Thus, we encourage you to breathe in deeply the air of history that surrounds us. Sit under the sun of cultural nuance where the Gullah-Geechee nation lights our path to age-old Black linguistic and culinary traditions. And lastly, taste the sea-salt of freedom that began in 1962 when our campus was integrated! Without a doubt, you are encouraged to become a Seahawk, and fly off in the distant future as a mythic Sankofa bird! Again, welcome! - Sean H. Palmer, Director
1962 – Marshall Collins and Ernest Fullwood were the first Black students to enroll in the newly integrated Wilmington College.

1966 – Ernest Fullwood was the first Black student to graduate from Wilmington College on June 12th, 1966.

1967 – Lela Pierce Thompson was the first Black female student to graduate from Wilmington College on June 11th, 1967.

1970 – The forerunner of the Black Student Union, Wantu Wazuri was established on December 9th, 1970 to support the development of Black Student Life.

1971 – The Theta Iota Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was the first NPHC organization to charter on April 24, 1971. Ralph Parker hired toe server as the Assistant Director of Admissions.

1977 – Black Student Union changed their name from Wantu Wazuri to its present name. The Iota Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc was established on December 17, 1977.

1978 – Wayne Dunlap was elected as the first Black Student Body president.

1981 – The Omicron Theta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha was established on May 5th, 1981. Dr. Hubert A. Eaton became the first Black chairman of the UNCW Board of Trustees on July 15, 1981.

1982 – The UNCW Gospel Choir was established.
1983 – Ralph Parker founds The Office of Minority Affairs.

1985 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Annual Speaker series begins. The Mu Nu Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. was established on December 15th, 1985.

1987 – The Pi Nu Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. was established in the Fall.

1988 - Karla Olson became the first female black student body president. The Rho Epsilon Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. was established on April 23, 1988.

1989 – The African American Graduate Association was founded on November 19, 1989. Ron Hamm was the first president. The Omicron Phi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc was established on December 3, 1989.

1993 - The minor in Africana Studies was approved in September 1993 as a minor in African-American Studies. The name was changed in October 2008.

1995 – The Upperman African American Cultural Center was established, with a generous gift from local physician, Dr. Leroy Upperman.

1997 – The Upperman Scholars program began, awarding 4-year scholarships to recipients. Its first awardee is Martin Jarmond, ’01.

2005 – The Rho Kappa Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho was established on April 17, 2005.

2012 – The Upperman Excellence Project for mentorship was established.

2013 – Linda Pearce was elected the first Black female Chair of the Board of Trustees.

2017 – The Black Graduate & Professional Student Association was established.
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