

1995

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Making a Difference: Affecting Policy

### Higher Education

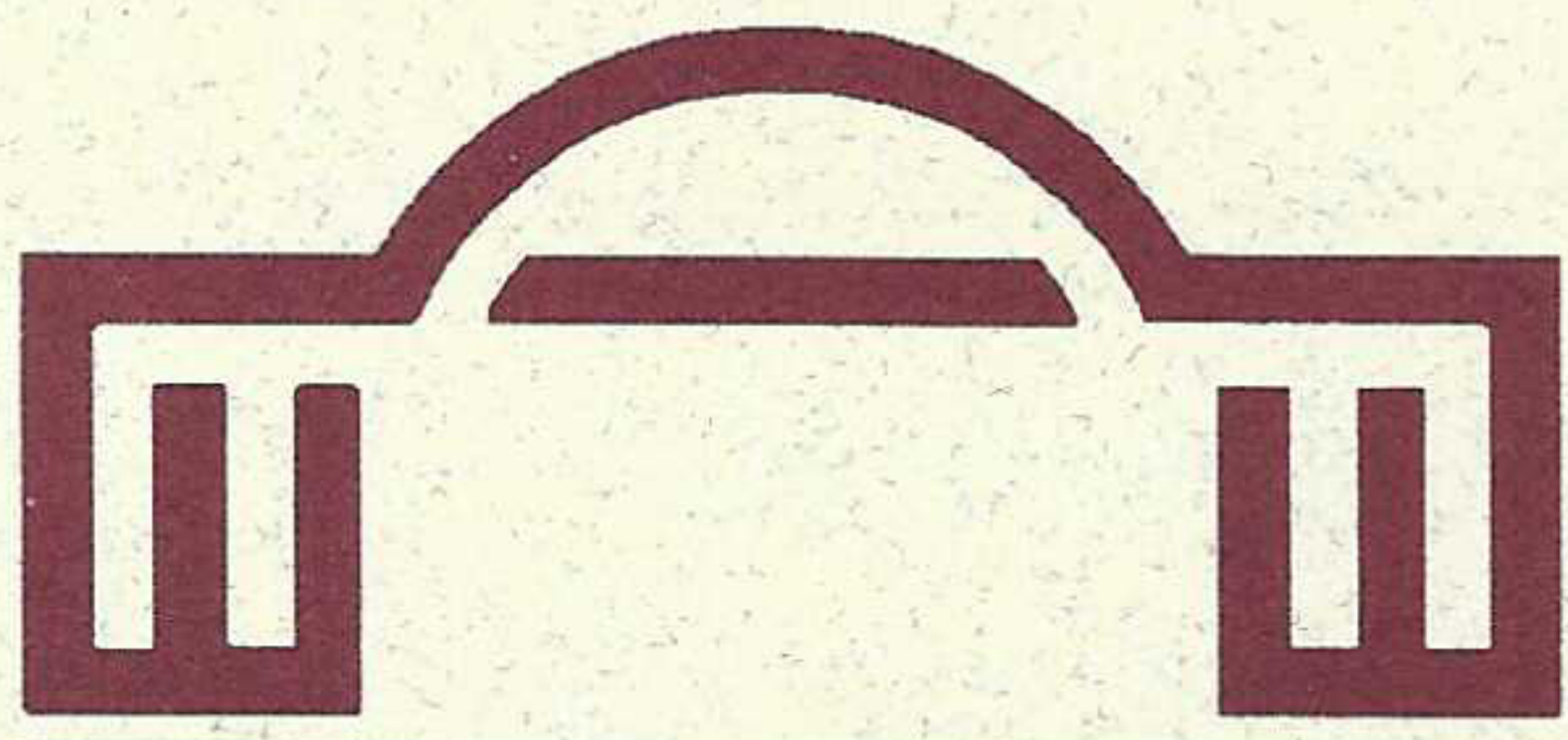
- More of the Center's recommendations to improve evaluation of and rewards for teaching at North Carolina's 16 public universities were implemented in 1995. The legislature appropriated \$250,000 for each of the next two years for teaching awards on the 16 campuses.
- In the final days of the 1995 session, the legislature enacted the first-ever mission statement for the state's 16 public universities which includes instruction, research, and public service. The legislation states, "Teaching and learning constitute the primary service that the university renders to society. Teaching, or instruction, is the primary responsibility of each of the constituent institutions."
- The General Assembly also directed the UNC Board of Governors to instruct the 16 campuses that teaching is primary in making faculty personnel decisions regarding tenure, teaching assignments, and promotions.
- The legislature required the Board of Governors to review the procedures used to screen and employ graduate teaching assistants and ensure that all teaching assistants have the ability to teach effectively.

### The Environment

- On September 1, 1995, the N.C. Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources published the first *North Carolina Environmental Indicators* report. The report credits our 1988 *North Carolina Insight* article with moving the state forward in evaluating environmental quality. We had recommended that the state initiate an environmental index to measure progress or decline in the state's air, water, soil, and other natural resources. In 1989, Gov. James G. Martin endorsed the idea in his Inaugural Address, and with a 1993 legislative appropriation, Gov. James B. Hunt's administration completed the task.
- Legislation was introduced requiring aerial applicators to notify nearby residents prior to spraying pesticides, as recommended by the Center in our 1994 study. This legislation is alive for consideration in the 1996 N.C. House.

### Open Government

- The 1995 legislature appropriated almost \$2 million for a TV tower in Lumberton to ensure that citizens throughout North Carolina have access to public television broadcasts. This action follows a February 1993 Center review of media programs that bring coverage of public affairs and government to North Carolina citizens. The Center made several recommendations to increase public access to the inner workings of government, including asking the legislature to appropriate funds to the UNC Center for Public Television to allow its broadcasts to be received in all of North Carolina, particularly in the southeast region.



## Minority Health

## N.C. Railroad/ School Choice

## Article II: A Guide to the N.C. Legislature

## Public Radio

## Legislative Testimony

## News Coverage

## Producing New Research

In 1995, the Center continued to identify key public policy issues facing North Carolina, raise the level of debate on those issues, and make recommendations for ways government can better serve our citizens. In the March issue of *Insight*, the Center released the findings and recommendations from our year-long study of the health of North Carolina's minority citizens. The study has received praise from people in the health care field and the media. It included recommendations for dealing with specific health problems and increasing the state's efforts in health promotion and disease prevention.

The September issue of *Insight* examined the N.C. Railroad, a public-private partnership, and made an innovative recommendation for the state to buy out the railroad's private stockholders. This issue also contained a balanced pro/con debate about school vouchers and school choice, one of the most talked-about education proposals of the past decade.

The Center also continued to make available more information about our elected officials. In February, we published the 10th edition of *Article II: A Guide to the N.C. Legislature*. This popular guide is the most comprehensive legislative guide available and contains addresses, telephone and fax numbers, biographical data, and voting records for all 170 legislators, as well as their committee appointments, bills introduced, and other information. With 54 new faces in the 1995-96 General Assembly, *Article II* is a particularly timely resource for citizens.

## Informing the Public

In the first full year of the Center's partnership with WUNC-FM Radio, we jointly produced reports featuring our research on minority health, the N.C. Railroad, and school vouchers. We also won a national award for our efforts. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting recently honored the Center and WUNC with a national award for Outstanding Outreach and Community Education. We will continue our work with WUNC and its sister stations to bring our research to more of the state's citizens. The Center also built on its partnership with the private 90-station N.C. [Radio] News Network by providing commentary on state politics and policy.

Center staff were invited to testify before four legislative groups during the past year. We presented our research and recommendations on evaluation and rewards for teaching at our public universities to a Legislative Research Commission. We also reviewed our research on state regulation of pesticides and campaign finance for two state Senate committees, and we reported on our research and recommendations regarding minority health to the bipartisan Legislative Black Caucus.

Once again, the Center's work garnered outstanding media coverage. In 1995, our work appeared in more than 200 articles and editorials. Center staff also made 26 speeches and public appearances this year as part of our public education efforts.

# Thoughts on the Center's Work

*The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has been shining light into the dark corners of North Carolina public affairs for 17 years, revealing plain facts and exposing the cobwebs of deceit and misrepresentation that too often tangle up the public debate.*

**News & Record, Greensboro**

*Five years of pesticide enforcement records in the Agriculture Department were examined in the public policy research center's study. Clear incentives were provided in the records for the General Assembly to take actions dealing with aerial applicators of pesticides.*

**The Asheville Citizen-Times**

*The Center, wisely, suggests a revised penalty system [for the state pesticide program], with increasingly higher charges for repeat offenders and serious violators. The state ought to take its advice.*

**Morning Star, Wilmington**

*I have long admired the in-depth analysis of issues confronting our State performed so admirably by the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research. When this group issues a report, you will know that the content has been well researched, well thought out and well written, without any bias to any particular position.*

**Representative Lyons Gray (R-Forsyth)**

*The report included in the March 1995 edition of North Carolina Insight will assist the Office of Minority Health and others in educating the public about minority health issues... . The recommendations included in your study will be very helpful as we plan for effective minority health strategies.*

**Dr. Ronald H. Levine, State Health Director**

*It is very important to us as policymakers to have a nonpartisan group of thinkers examining thorny state issues in-depth and with objectivity.*

**Senator Leslie Winner (D-Mecklenburg)**

*The Center's study [on the N.C. Railroad] is compelling. Buying out private stockholders, using revenue from the new lease to finance it, is a solution worth pursuing.*

**The Charlotte Observer**

*We are particularly proud of the results of the Minority Health study undertaken by the Center, and sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome. We hope to continue in partnership with the Center and others to improve the health and quality of life of our North Carolina citizens.*

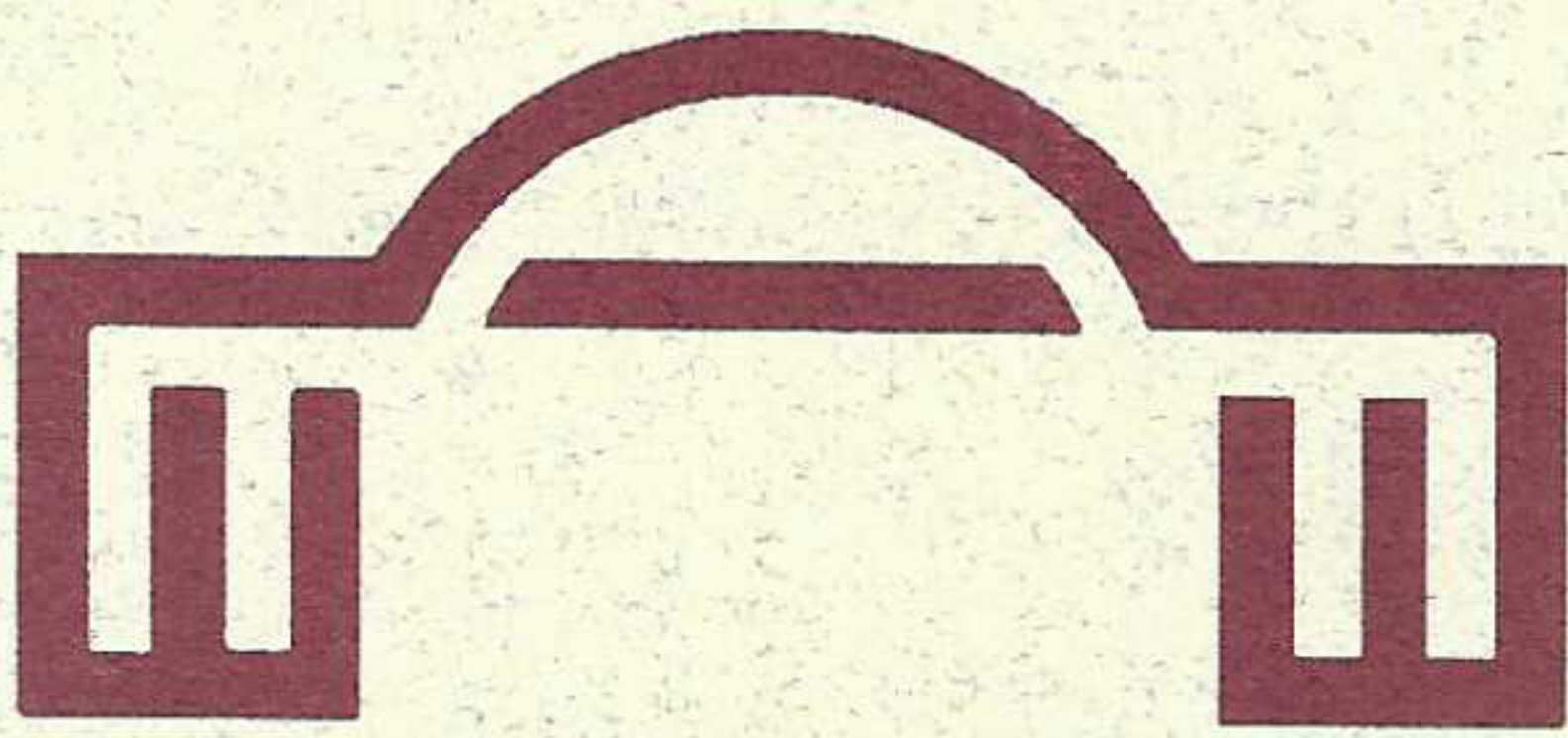
**Marilyn Foote-Hudson, Glaxo Wellcome Inc.**

*I continue to be impressed by the Center's ability to anticipate the important public policy issues that will face North Carolina, and to make unbiased research on these issues available to legislators, the business community, and citizens. This timely, important, accessible research is contributing to a better informed citizenry and thus to better government and better decisions for all North Carolinians.*

**Ruth G. Shaw, Duke Power Company**

## The Center's Mission

*"The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to the goals of a better-informed public and more effective, accountable, and responsive government."*



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## The Center's Plans for 1996

The Center's Board and staff work hard to anticipate issues that will be important to North Carolina citizens and to bring you independent research on these issues. We already have several research projects underway for publication in 1996.

Early in the year, *Insight* will examine **the changing relationship between state and local governments**, including research on unfunded mandates levied on local governments. Later in the year, we'll publish our study on **trends in funding for the arts** in North Carolina and our evaluation of **year-round schools**. Yet another issue of *Insight* will examine **state economic development policy**.

We'll publish a new edition of *North Carolina Focus*, the Center's textbook on **state government**, state politics, and state public policy issues. *Focus* is used in state and local government courses in colleges and universities and in social studies classes in North Carolina's public schools. We'll also publish **effectiveness rankings of legislators and lobbyists** and begin studying the advantages and disadvantages of the **governance structure of the UNC system** and how it compares with systems in other states.

In addition to our research on policy issues facing North Carolina, we will continue working to improve public policy with solid recommendations based on our research. We see several opportunities in 1996. We will continue to take our research and recommendations on improving the state's pesticide program before both the legislature and the N.C. Pesticide Board. We'll also continue to look for ways to implement the recommendations we made for closing the gap in disease and death rates for minority citizens. Finally, there are four legislative study commissions which may be interested in our research on **school choice, state election laws, campaign finance, and state and local government fiscal relations and trends**.

We encourage you to suggest topics that would benefit from the Center's independent analysis. If you have suggestions, comments, or if you would like to order a copy of any Center publication, please call us at **919-832-2839**, or send us a fax at **919-832-2847**.