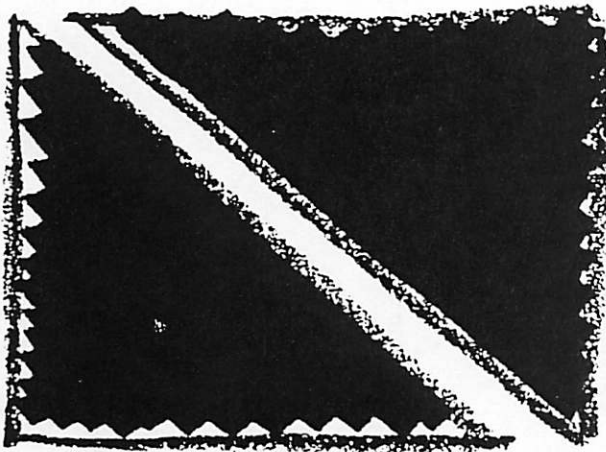


THE 1993 COOL CONFERENCE



**LISTEN
TO THE VOICES**



**MAKE THE
CONNECTIONS**



**1993 COOL NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE**

By Christina Alburas

The 1993 COOL National Conference at the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana was my first COOL conference and a chance to gain valuable support, insight, and new approaches to my own work in community service and not-for-profit organizations.

Like many other participants, my chief motivation in attending was to network and make contacts from across the country in my job search. Having graduated almost a year ago I needed to meet new people and find new organizations interested in working with a person having the skills and creativity I can offer. The incredible wealth of enthusiastic, hard-working, sensitive, and caring individuals I met at the Opportunities Fair and in the workshops proved more encouraging and motivating than I imagined possible.

I'm unable to count the times I found myself and fellow participants leafing through the conference booklet in desperation trying to decide which workshops to attend. I attended all seven workshop sessions and expected to have at least one of them turn to waste due to mishap. The workshops I attended were from start to finish overflowing with attendees, lively discussions, invaluable information and approaches to provide quality community service to a multitude of American communities.

As someone working for social change and the good of the community, I often find I'm missing support and camaraderie. The COOL Conference was a time for me to meet people working or living in communities similar to my own and to compare notes on the changes that are taking place. Sometimes it's difficult to recognize the changes when one is immersed in creating the change.

I met people with whom I could share the frustrations and triumphs of the community I live and work in, and people who could also point out approaches to better communication between myself and the organization as well as the organization and the people. I found myself taking notes even at meals and cultural events because the information offered to me was not always cloaked in the workshop setting.

Since returning from the COOL conference, I've pored over my notes and shared them with anyone who will listen. The conference reminded me that what I do in my everyday life matters because I care, and that there are a lot of other people in this country and the world who feel like I do. Together, we will make the changes happen by listening to the voices.

Christina Alburas, a '92 graduate of The Evergreen State College, is currently living in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and looking for a job with a non-profit organization.

The photographer, Jenna Walsh, is a senior in advertising at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

CAMPUS OUTREACH

The Journal of Student Community Involvement

cover by
Kathlene Lester,
Warren Wilson College
Swannanoa, NC
with the photographs
of Jenna Walsh,
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign

CAMPUS OUTREACH STAFF

Publishers
Joanna Bender and Nancy E. Grubb

Co-Editors
Kathlene Lester and Angie Newsome

Design
Kathlene Lester and Angie Newsome

STAFF WRITERS
Kathlene Lester and Angie Newsome

GUEST WRITERS, ARTISTS & PHOTOGRAPHERS
Christina Alburas, Alexis Baptist, Robert Hackett, Roger Reinert, Trahan Shorters, Jenna Walsh and Nicholas H. Wood

GRAPHICS
Chris Koth, author of *Tray Gourmet*

PRINTING
Tasty-Prints, St. Paul, MN

CAMPUS OUTREACH
(ISSN 1046-6975), the journal of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL), is published bi-monthly. Copyright 1992 by the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL). Generously reprinted with permission. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the COOL staff and Board of Directors. Subscriptions to *Campus Outreach* are \$15 dollars a year. Send check or money order to COOL, 386 McNeal Hall, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108-1011. Articles, photographs, poetry, artwork and letters to the editors should be sent to: Angie and Kathlene, Warren Wilson College, Box 5907, 701 Warren Wilson Road, Swannanoa, NC 28778, or call us at 704/298-3325, ext. 409.

ARTICLES:

- Issues Forum: National Service in the Guise of Work-Study.....p. 5**
By Roger J. Reinert
- Technical Assistance: Workshop Design: A Different Perspective.....p. 6**
By Trahan Shorters
- First Person: Action Research for Service: Something New to Think About.....p. 13**
By Robert Hackett

COVER STORY:

- THE 1993 COOL CONFERENCE.....p. 8**
By Christina Alburas
- Keynote Address of Alexis Baptist.....p. 9**
By Alexis Baptist

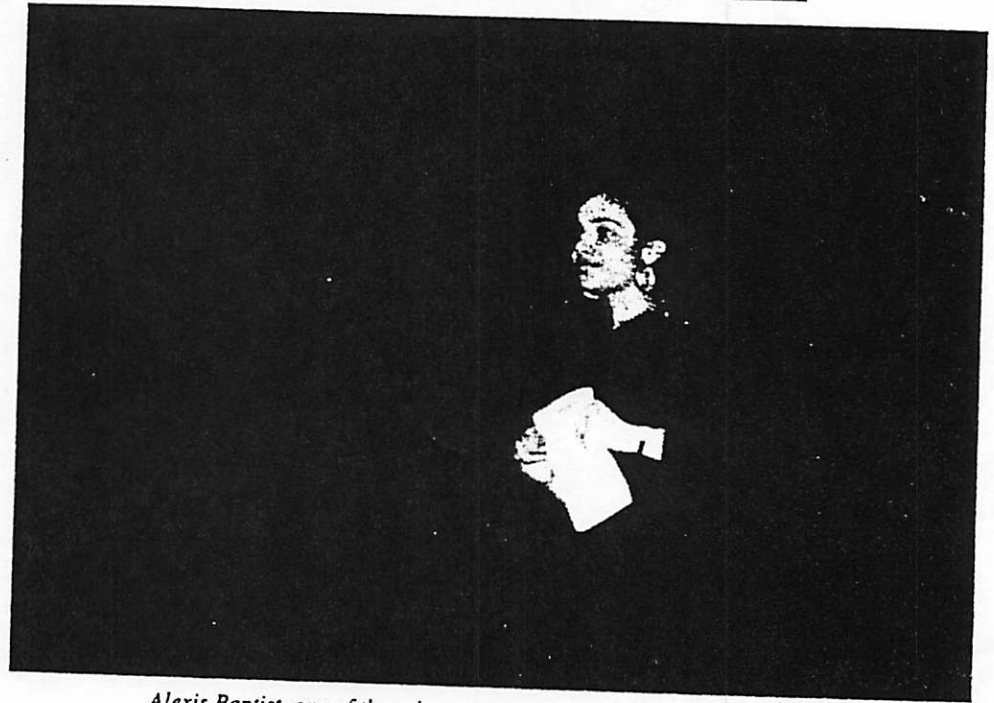
DEPARTMENTS:

- Editors Speak.....p. 2**
- Listen to This: Readers' Responses.....p. 4**
- From COOL Staff.....p. 12**
- What's Happening?.....p. 14**
- Check This Out!.....p. 14**

Keynote Address of Alexis Baptist

When I heard the theme my mind went blank. I heard that the COOL conference brought together college kids to talk about real change and real solutions. So, I expected the theme to be militant, powerful, damn near revolutionary. But I felt none of that the first minute I contemplated the theme. I was disappointed. Oh well, I thought, another lame, do-gooder conference. But then it happened—Listen to the Voices; Make the Connections. I thought about it. It made sense; it was real. I thought about all of the voices I hear around me everyday and what they say. The kid next door who can't wait to get high. The kids down the street who need to make some quick cash. The girl who works at McDonalds and hasn't given anything past tomorrow night any serious thought. My friends who graduated from high school in June of 1992 and were in the army by August of 1992. The college graduate who can't find a job and wants to kill herself because she thinks she's a failure. Everyday it's something new. I hear about old friends dying or killing or about so and so being pregnant or addicted. Guess whose mother just died with no health insurance. Guess who's living on the streets. Guess who's doing time. I've almost become conditioned to hearing bad news. Oh well, we lost another one.

Has our whole generation gone crazy? **THE HOMICIDAL/SUICIDAL GENERATION?** When I listen to the voices I hear anger, frustration, both conscious and unconscious demands for change. I hear a loss of faith in the government, its officials, and in the system itself. My own voice and those like mine are questioning and searching for truth and reason. These voices are looking to understand. What is our place?



Alexis Baptist, one of three keynote speakers. Photo by Jenna Walsh.

How can we fight? **WHAT IS THE CONNECTION?**

Just the other day in Philly, we heard about 18 and 16 year old brothers who shot and killed a man for his car. The

“When I listen to the voices I hear anger, frustration, both conscious and unconscious demands for change.”

media had a field day; it was racial! We must tighten gun control! They were sadistic, cold blooded murderers! I grieve

for the man that was murdered. It didn't have to happen. But, I also grieve for the two young pieces of our future we've lost, and I hold the system that created them responsible. Those two boys, and all the young people like them, represent victims—victims of a system that just does not work. A system that is sacrificing its youth in hopes of profit. A system that has turned its back on its very future.

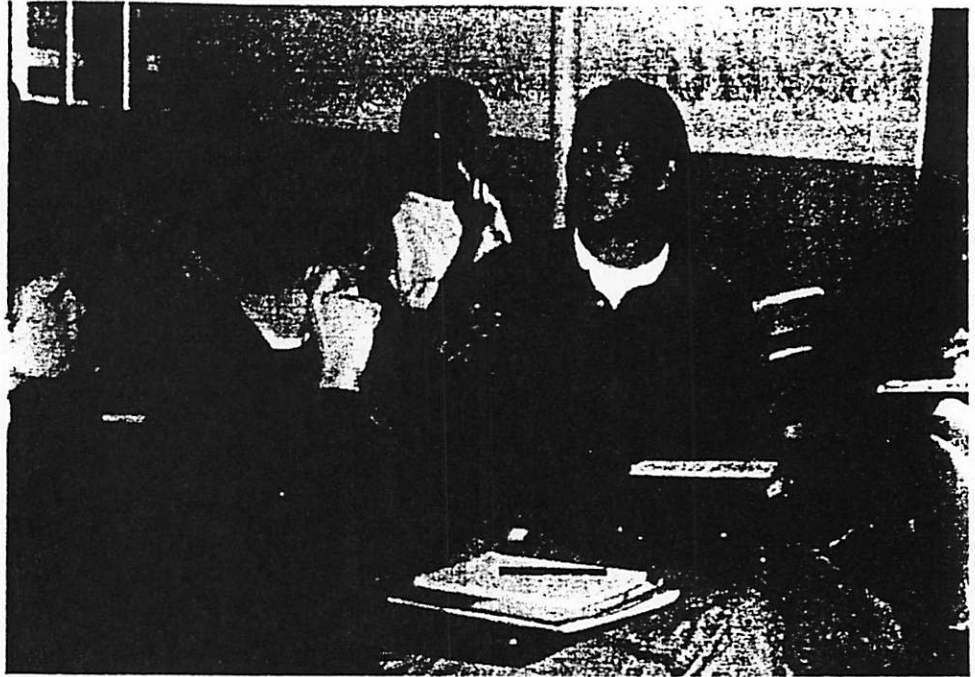
It wasn't always like this, so I hear. Thirty, 20, 15 years ago, a young person could graduate from high school, go to college or find a job, make an honest living, get their own place, and then raise a family and maybe buy a house. Cool! Today that is a fantasy for most of us. So what went wrong? It seems to be all about priorities, investments, and economics. Economics. We see crazy amounts of middle America losing their

continued on next page

Continued from previous page

mechanical/factory jobs, losing their homes, and losing their stability to quickly slide down to join the "poor." We see them struggling for their basic human rights in addition to their survival. We see the poor living in poverty that mirrors that of third-world countries. We see highly trained students graduate into the world unable to find any job, let alone one in their field. We see the number of unemployed, homeless, and publicly assisted people growing at an unbelievable rate. Could all of this be happening because people have suddenly become lazy, stopped working as hard as we used to? Have we lost our sense of values?

No. All of these problems are symptoms of a much deeper illness. We all understand that there are the rich and the poor. We understand that the system, the government, and the laws are made to support the rich and to keep the poor in line. It's been like that forever, and it was alright to a certain extent. The poor had their little bit—a house, a car, and family security. But today things are changing; the rich are competing to get richer while pushing the poor deeper into poverty. This has gotten to the point that their very survival is threatened. Technology plays



Conference participants in one of many workshops. Photo by Jenna Walsh.

used against us by taking our jobs and creating a class of permanently unemployed people. All of this threatens to push the quality of life down for all of the working poor and unemployed. This is clear when you look at the hundreds of thousands of people that were laid off last year in just about every industry, from General Motors to Campbell Soups. So now we have more people competing for

even read are graduating from high school. Classrooms are over-crowded; many times 30 to 40 kids are in one class. Breakfast and lunch programs are being cut. It's being said over and over again that children are the future so why isn't the government investing in them? They have billions to test military airplanes and send monkeys to the moon, but the money just isn't there for education.

When you think about it, it all makes sense in a cruel but very real way. With the shrinking job market, it's very possible that many kids graduating from school today may never work. They are competing against their parents and sometimes their grandparents for a job. So why invest in a generation of young people that have no use, no economic value, no future? It's unfortunate, but that is the reality that youth face today. The government hasn't said it straight-up yet, but when they close down community centers and libraries, we know. When crack houses are visibly opening while public rehabilitation centers are closing, we know. When military weapons "mysteriously" find their way onto our

continued on next page

“This is one of the most violence systems in the world; vicious is the only word I can think of to describe a system that throws people out onto the streets and makes babies go to bed hungry.”

a huge part in the on-going quest for the almighty dollar. Computers and robots can now do the work of massive amounts of people in a fraction of the time. Great, that should make life easier for working people—fewer hours, safer working conditions, better lives. NO such luck! Instead of helping us, technology has been

fewer jobs at lower wages.

This transfers into our day-to-day lives in the boldest, most harmful ways. Just look at the educational system. There are schools all over the United States where children are learning out of books that were printed in the 1960's, if they even have books. Young people who can't

Continued from previous page

streets and in our schools, we know.

When officer friendly becomes the enemy, we know. There is no doubt in our minds; youth know that we are under attack. The government hopes that we will be content with the few crumbs they give up to keep us quiet and disunited. They are hoping that the youth have been so beaten down and misguided that we will except their attacks without opposition.

BUT, out of the frustration, out of the anger, out from the wreckage of a falling system comes the whispers of revolution, the talk of change, the shouts for ACTION! In response to the devastating new problems we're facing, young new leaders are emerging with new solutions. The problems we face are "new and improved," "extra-strength," more severe, and definitely fatal. The new solutions have got to be just as severe and even more fatal. Death to a system that abandons its youth!

The CONNECTION is being made! Unity is the call, organization and activity are the methods. Unity has got to be the first step in organizing for activity. The system is constantly trying to divide us by color, neighborhoods, schools, working or unemployed, housed or homeless. Unity is strength and to keep us divided is to keep us weak. Our unity is much more important than any differences we may have. We've got to understand what we are fighting for. Who and what we are fighting against? How are we going to fight? We must understand that we are uniting for our lives, our survival, and our future. Unity has to lead to organization. In the survival movement they say, "You only get what you organize to take." In 1993 that's what it boils down to.

In Philadelphia we have said, "No more!" We are tired of losing friends and constantly being under attack. We have begun to organize what we believe will be the movement of the 90's. YOUTH UNITY? EVOLUTION OF REVOLUTION has pledged to lead a real fight for positive and concrete change. We have committed ourselves to help

develop and carry out the new strategies and tactics in the battle for our futures. In the spirit of great movements like the Black Panther Party and great leaders like

“So why invest in a generation of young people that have no use, no economic value, no future? It's unfortunate, but that is the reality that youth face today.”

Fred Hampton, we have begun to unite youth through political education and, more importantly, through action.

Again, when we talk about new

strategies and tactics, we have to understand who we're fighting. This is one of the most violent systems in the world: vicious is the only word I can think of to describe a system that throws people out onto the streets and makes babies go to bed hungry. In the land of plenty this kind of system should be criminal, and any laws that support it should not be respected. We have no time to waste. The time has got to be now, and, by the way, "By any means necessary." There is a saying, "We cannot change unless we survive, but we will not survive unless we change." It's true. Let's do both.

Alexis Baptist is a 19-year-old student at Community College of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a member of Up and Out of Poverty Now! and co-founder of Youth Unity Evolution of Revolution, a youth movement run by and for young people dedicated to raising the struggle for human rights to the next level.



Conference participants on community plunge. Photo by Jenna Walsh