October 22, 2012

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

Ralph H. Bradshaw was Riverside City College’s third President, following A.G. Paul and O.W. Noble. His administration spanned the years 1963 to 1972.

Bradshaw joined the college’s staff in 1946 teaching English, Reading Improvement, History and Psychology. In 1950 he accepted the responsibilities of Dean of Men. After six years and a term as Director of Personnel at Riverside City Schools, Bradshaw served as RCC’s Vice President and Director of the Department of Secondary Education at the City Schools. In 1963, he became the President/Superintendent of Riverside City College following the resignation of O.W. Noble due to failing health. The May 23, 1963 "Tiger Times" article (reproduced below) announced the changeover in administrations.
Bradshaw was RCC’s President during most of the turbulent 1960s and early 1970s. Not only was it a time of great social upheaval, but it was a time of physical changes for the campus. The Riverside Poly High School campus was purchased, demolished and RCC expanded on the property. Constructed on this land were the new Library, Life and Physical Science buildings and Student Center.

When Bradshaw left RCC in 1972 at the age of 54, his career in education was not yet over. He completed his studies at Claremont Graduate School earning his Ph.D. in Education Administration. Soon after, he began work developing a program in Educational Administration at the University of California, Riverside. He also returned to RCC part-time to teach English. His commitment to education covered over 30 years prior to his 1982 retirement. On June 19, 1984, the Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees voted unanimously to name the College’s Student Center after Bradshaw. The ceremony took place on July 17, 1984 when Dr. Bradshaw addressed a crowd of some 200 people in the Hall of Fame. He told the history of the RCC Student Center. In his words:

“We were short of money, had to raze old Poly High School, get voter approval of bonds…it was enough to make gray hair even grayer. But the results are, as you can see, well worth it. In 1967, I recommended to the Board of Trustees against naming buildings after people, I can now see the error of my ways.”

Below can been seen two photos of that day as covered by the September 1984 “Riverside City College Reports” District publication. The top photo shows RCCD Board President Francis Nelson presenting Dr. Bradshaw with a plaque honoring him as the “Builder of the College”. Looking on are (left to right) Riverside Mayor and former RCCD Board Member Ab Brown, Board Member Dr. Wilfred Airey, Board Secretary Alan Pauw and former Board Member Carolyn Diffenbaugh. The bottom photo shows the unveiling of the new name of the Student Center. Dr. Bradshaw can be seen seated on the right.
It is 3 years and 20 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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