

## CAU to close Library School

### Shutdown part of Broadnax's survival plan

By Maynard Eaton

*"CAU is in a state of chaos,"*

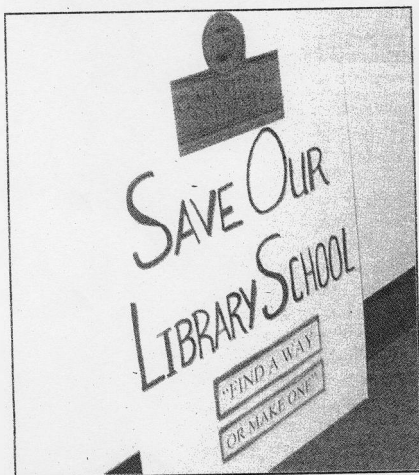
*-- Dr. Marvin Haire,*

*CAU political science professor*

First it was Paschal's restaurant, the historic eatery and civil rights meeting place that was shut down, now embattled Clark Atlanta University President Walter Broadnax is threatening to close the university's historic and beloved school of library and information studies -- which has an enrollment of 99 students -- as part of a campus wide effort to slash spending.

But students, faculty and librarians across the country are protesting the move -- claiming the 62-year-old school and the only accredited library education program in Georgia -- is too valuable. It educates and graduates more African American librarians than any other college in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

"It's the only black library school in the world,"



claims alumnus Francine Henderson. "To just let such a program die, what does that say about us as a people?"

"It's one of the best library schools in the world," says librarian Janice Sikes. "We have persons all over

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# Clark Atlanta University to close Library School

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the world who are graduates of our library school. When we graduate each one of us have at least two or three job offers. So, it is not a question about the excellence of the program."

About 80 outraged and upset CAU alumni and supporters rallied at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on Monday (9/30) to sign petitions and plot strategy on how to rescue the doomed school.

"We serve all of Atlanta, all of Georgia, much of this country, and certain parts of the world," says Arthur Dunn, the dean of CAU's library school. "When one looks at the legacy and what we continue to do there is no question that this is a legacy worth continuing."

But that doesn't seem likely. Broadnax says he will recommend closing the library school after 2004-05 when the Board of Trustees meets Oct.16. While the college is cash-strapped – it overspent its \$100 million budget by \$7.5 million last year – the library school is not a financial drain. In fact, more the 50 percent of its budget, some \$475,000, comes from the Georgia Board of Regents. Broadnax alleges, however, that the school has long battled money problems, apathy and declining enrollment.

"They have been struggling for a long time," he says in a statement. "We have to look at our strengths and weaknesses as a college and make cuts where we are

not strong. What's on the table is saving this university."

CAU political science professor Dr. Marvin Haire says the library closing is merely the tip of a much larger and more menacing iceberg.

"In the context of a fiscal crisis departments are being cut, faculty have been asked to retire, secretaries

and other staff have been cut, programs are on the table to be axed, 157 non-tenured faculty received letters of non-renewal," he told the angry group of librarians. "So, are we in chaos or are we in community? Is this a time for the silence of the lambs or is it time for the trumpet of conscience to sound?"