1. **Title and Subtitle of Report**

2. **Performing Organization Name(s) and Address(es)**
   Elizabeth City State University
   1704 Weeksville Road Box 672

3. **Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Name(s) and Address(es)**
   Office of Naval Research

4. **Funding Numbers**
   N00014-91-J-1308

5. **Performing Organization Report Number**
   5-52560

6. **Abstract (Maximum 200 words)**
   Final report on the Home Institution support project. Statistics are included for the 1994-95 academic year.
1995 FINAL REPORT OF THE
ECSU HOME-INSTITUTION SUPPORT PROGRAM

SUBMITTED TO
THE OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH

BY

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Linda Hayden, Principal Investigator
Box 672 ECSU
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
(919) 335-3617    FAX: 919-335-3487
email: LHAYDEN@UNCECS.EDU

PAST FUNDING INFORMATION:
FUNDING PERIOD: 1/1/91 TO 9/30/94
GRANT # N00014-91-J-1308
R&T CODE: 4331800---02
S. O. CODE: 1133
DISBURSING CODE: N00179
AGO CODE: N66005
CAGE CODE: OJLKO

19960501 087
PART I: A succinct narrative which should summarize last year’s objectives and accomplishments.

A. Specific program objectives for the past year (please restate the overall goals and specific objectives of your program. Be as quantitative as possible.)

The ECSU-ISSP Home Institution Support Program provided a strong home institution support environment, for Elizabeth City State University students who participated in the HU-ONR Intensive Summer Studies Program (ISSP). This basis of support nurtured the research interest of our ECSU-ISSP students and better equipped our students to gain as much as possible from the HU-ISSP experience. This program had three components:

1) A macintosh computer network.
2) A visiting lecturer program
3) A student/sponsor travel program

THE FOLLOWING PAGES DESCRIBE EACH OF THE COMPONENTS LISTED ABOVE.
Location:

115 Lester Hall, Math and Computer Science Dept.

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Linda Hayden
Box 617 ECSU 1704 Weeksville Road
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
(919) 335-3617 voice, (919) 335-3487 fax
lhayden@umfort.ecsu.edu
http://www.ecsu.edu

Networking:

• Currently all workstations are networked using TCP/IP (NIS and NSF servers) allowing complete access to the internet.

• Upgrading to ATM Technology Summer '95

HARDWARE

3 Silicone Graphics Workstations (INDY2 and Iris)
10 Additional INDY2 workstations to be added summer '95
12 Sun Sparc Workstations running Sun O/S
10 486 PC converted to LINUX
2 Power Macintosh 8100
1 Power Macintosh 7100
12 Macintosh Computers (IIci, classic II, LC)

Peripherals and Printers

• Variety of Laser and Color Printers
• Color Cameras
• Color and Greyscale Scanners
• INDYCAM
• VCR/TV
• Projection Panels

Tutorial Assistance is available daily to student researchers.
VISITING LECTURE PROGRAM

The Visiting Lecturer Program provided funds to bring speakers to our campus each semester. These outside speakers were chosen to stimulate faculty research and give additional insight to students. Students gained exposure to role models other than those within their departments.

The following individuals participated in the Visiting Lecturer Program.

Dr. K. C. Wong Professor of Computer Science, Fayetteville State University (July, 1994) spoke on The Client Server Model

Melvin Blackwell Owner of SoSoft Software Consultant Company (Jan. 20, 1994) spoke on The Client Server Model

Mr. Robert Norris spoke (Oct. 26, 1993) Virtual Reality

Mr. Eric Harris (Nov. 11, 1993) spoke on Software Testing and Internships

Dr. William Hawkins (Feb. 17, 1994), Director of SUMMA for the Mathematical Association of America spoke on Contributions made by Black Mathematicians and Computer Scientists

Dirlene Cannon (Mar. 25, 1994), System Analyst with Comtek Federal Systems spoke on X-Window Environment

Dr. Scott Owen (Mar. 30, 1994), Education Chairman for ACM/SIGGRAPH spoke on Computer Graphics and Visualization.

Dr. Beauregard Stubblefield (Feb. 17, 1994) spoke on Mathematics and Medicine

Sharon L. Ramsey, Staff Computer Scientist, Process Control & Computer Technology Division of Alcoa Laboratories (Oct. 1992) spoke on Computer Visualization and the Motif GUI.

Tom Zippoll, Engineer with Sun Microsystems (Feb. 1993) conducted the Sunsparc New Users Seminar.

Darnley Archer, Programmer Analyst for St. Mary's College of Maryland (March 1993) conducted an Introduction to Windows.

Dr. Guy Hogan from Norfolk State University (Feb. 1993) was the guest speaker during our Sixth Annual Colloquium on Black Mathematicians and Computer Scientists.

Mark Gillicinski from the National Security Agency (July 1992), spoke on Large Software Development Projects during.
Student/Sponsor Travel Program

The travel funds available through this grant were used to support student travel to undergraduate research conferences where these students presented there research findings. In technical fields, the information available at conferences and meetings, reflect the current state-of-the-art. This critical information is often not available, in a timely fashion, through print media. In addition, the association and contacts with other researchers, scientist, and vendors, at these meetings, often prove invaluable.

The following is a list of the conferences and meetings which students and their sponsors attended:

- Second Annual HBCU/Private Sector Energy Research and Development
- Technology Transfer Symposium National Conference on Undergraduate Research
- Georgia Tech FOCUS/King Week Celebration
- NAFEO High Tech Expo
- National Undergraduate Research Conference
- Black Issues in Higher Education Graduate School and Job Fair
- SOAR Conference (Seizing Opportunities for Advancing Research)
- NAAAS (National Association of African American Studies)
B. Mentoring activities: how were mentors selected and trained? What were the major mentoring activities? How frequently did mentors meet with students?

In the past we have held rather informal sessions with our department student researchers on the second Wednesday night of each month from 5:30 PM until. Since many student researchers have a key to the laboratory, they often remain well into the night to assist one another with their classwork and research projects. We have used these opportunities to discuss topics of interest to the whole group (i.e. upcoming travel opportunities, preparation of abstracts in specific formats required for submission, photo opportunities, progress checks, dissemination of graduate school information and internship opportunity information, preparation of overhead transparencies and posters for student use during their travel. We usually chip in and order pizza for the group. This has proven to be a successful technique for mentoring, and the tradition has been made part of the new NERT in PPCV program funded by ONR.

It was a policy to have the ISSP students serve as tutors for other students. The tutoring assignments allowed the ISSP students to keep current on material learned in previous classes. Research shows that students who serve as tutors gain a deeper insight into the material.

Many of the ISSP students were assigned to work in the Macintosh laboratory giving technical assistance to their classmates. This policy gave the ISSP students access to and time to review the individual training modules available in the laboratory. Further, Sharon Saunders and Cory Cooper worked under the supervision of Dr. Hayden to design and carry out a Macintosh
network training program from which all ISSP students could benefit.

To compliment the efforts made with in the CCMP departments, or ISSP students were strongly advised to take full advantage of the ECSU campus services. ECSU has already in place a host of student services including individual and group counseling and developmental group activities. Also contributing to the nurturing atmosphere at ECSU is the fact that we have only a 5% rate of adjunct faculty. Further, the university regularly holds family meetings both campus wide and within the individual department. Social activities are scheduled each semester to allow faculty and students to relate outside of the classroom. This includes both a Christmas dinner in the fall and a cookout in the spring. Faculty and students work together to make these events a success.

We at ECSU have a long and proud history of mentoring minority students. Many of whom are first generation college students. Recognizing that, we maintain contact with the homes and families of our students and invite their families to contact us.
C. Curriculum changes/enhancements supported by this ONR grant.

No curriculum changes/enhancements were supported under this grant.

*Faculty self-improvement activities: where were these performed and what were the activities?

No faculty self-improvement activities were funded through this ONR program.

*Visiting faculty: provide names, departmental affiliations, and major activities.

No visiting faculty were acquired through this program.

*Other faculty activities under this grant which you wish to report.

There were no other faculty activities under this grant.
D. Programs for students supported by this ONR grant (In this section please discuss recruiting activities, summer educational/enrichment programs, research opportunities, internships, mentoring programs, problems associated with mentoring programs)

For the summer of 1994, Hampton University(HU) program officials requested ECSU to select 9 students to participate in the HU-ISSP program. The Hampton University ISSP program offer students the opportunity to take major courses which are not offered at ECSU. During the ISSP program, students have the opportunity to perform research (at the appropriate level) within their discipline.

Mr. Willis, Director of the Hampton SEMS program has informed us that this will be the last summer that students from other universities will be invited to participate in their ISSP. The restriction of ISSP to include only HU students was necessitated by current funding of that program. We have however initiated a summer research program in parallel processing and computer visualization in which many of these students will be included.

The following is a complete listing of all the 1994 summer ISSP program participants from ECSU. (Classifications are as of Summer '94. The Mean GPA of all 1994 participants is 2.961)

1994 ISSP Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>name</th>
<th>major</th>
<th>class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clutilda Monk</td>
<td>math ed</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Flood</td>
<td>physics</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Holley</td>
<td>chemistry</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guana Dixon</td>
<td>chemistry</td>
<td>junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Roberts</td>
<td>physics</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matresha Walker</td>
<td>cs</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reginal Turner</td>
<td>cs</td>
<td>junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonya Best</td>
<td>cs</td>
<td>junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dovella Moore</td>
<td>cs</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. Facilities and equipment supported by this grant (purchases, impact on program)

The following is a list of hardware purchases which have enhanced the Macintosh network of computers. We have also added ethernet cards to the LC computers and the IIci computer.

- Hitachi VHS CAMCORDER
- 6 Mac classic II bundle w/ personal laser printer
- cdrom drive
- HP ScanJet II scanner
- Fotoman Digital Camera
- tvt projection panel
- Battery Recharger
- 4MB SIMMS
- POWERBOOK 165
- APPLE NEWTON
- LASERWRITER PRO 630 printer
- BJC600 bubble jet printer + supplies

The following is a list of software and reference material purchased to support the student researchers and the Macintosh network.

- Renderman
- Minix
- MACDRAW PRO
- IMAGES WITH IMPACT-PEOPLE 1
- ALDUS 4.0 ADV. VIDEO
- ALDUS 4.0 INTRO VIDEO
- M.SOFTE WORKS 2.0 ADV VIDEO
- STUDYWARE GRE
- STUDYWARE SAT
- DRAWART CLIPART BUS & ED
- DRAWART ACCENTS & BORDERS
- 101 SCRIPTS & BUTTONS H.CARD
- HYPERTOOL 2.1
- MACPRINT 1.2
- SWIVELART 3D CLIPART
- hypercard 2.0 creating cards & stacks
- system 7 using the Mac interface video
- adv. system 7 features
- Ind. training for pagemaker 4.0
- microsoft works adv. database
  + database & form letters
- microsoft works spreadsheet
- macintosh survival course
- Mac repair & Upgrade secrets
- folder bolts
- Macintosh programming fundamentals
- mega rom 2.1 cdrom
- 100ns 2mb simms
- clickart cdrom
- bannermania cdrom
- computer cleaning kit
- clickart vol 5 b orders
- cd software encycl., atlas, sci
- development software & tutorials
- microsoft works 3.0
- POSTERWORKS
- effects specialist
- multiclip
- programmer cd reference
- magnet
- BBS in a box vol VII
- disk express II 2.10
- the system 7 book
- using the Mac with system 7
- The Mac classic book
- Using MacDraw Pro
typestyler
- norton utilities
- power users toolkit
- randomhouse encyclopedia
- wordperfect office
- cd7 super library
- gigabyte 2.0 cdrom
F. Specific program objectives for next year (please be as quantitative as possible).

ONR has funded a program entitled "Nurturing ECSU Research Talent" at ECSU. This program will include all students currently involved in the Home Institution Support Program. This is the final report of the Home Institution Support Program since the program has terminated.
1994-95 ENROLLMENT AND GPA REPORT

Data on student enrollment and performance is requested for the overall science and engineering student body, and for students supported under the ONR grant in order to have an internal comparison at your school.

Please see the following table for data. Our Institution does not offer a degree in engineering. No biology majors are involved in this program. **ONR students made up 17.4% of the graduating class and 66.7% of those who went on to graduate school.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Discipline</th>
<th>Number of students enrolled at school (by year)</th>
<th>Number of students enrolled in ONR Program (by year)</th>
<th>Number of students graduated</th>
<th>Number Graduate Professional School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>SO</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGINEERING</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOLOGY</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEMISTRY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPUTER SCIENCE</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATHEMATICS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Year Mean GPA Mean GPA
for all for ONR students students
Freshman 2.331 3.498
Sophomore 2.502 3.740
Junior 2.709 3.050
Senior 2.956 3.023

1994-95 GRE DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Computer Graphics/Visualization Project Description
3-D Modeling and Viewing

The computer visualization project, which students funded under AASERT will investigate, shall consist of three stages. In the first stage, the student researchers will be given lectures concerning solid modeling and visualization. For the solid modeling, they will learn how to represent a solid object using an edge-based boundary model. They will also be taught how to obtain a new object from an existing one or from scratch using Euler operators. As to visualization, they will be given the concepts of 3D viewing, shading and texturing.

In the second stage, the students will define data structures for a solid object using the edge-based boundary model and define a subroutine for each Euler operator. Then we will use the Euler operators to build a set of primitives such as cube, sphere, cylinder, cone and torus. We will also use the Euler operators to build high level operators like sweeping (including both translational sweep and rotational sweep), gluing and assembling. After this stage, students have a simplified solid modeling system based on Euler operators.

In the third stage, students will develop the software for the Gouraud shading and Phong shading as well as for the solid texturing. Finally, they will design objects using the solid modeling system build in the second stage and visualize these objects using the software developed in this stage.

Visualization/Graphics Team
Instructor: Dr. Jingyuan Zhang
Assistant Instructor: Stephanie Vaughan
Consultant: Dr. Scott Owens
ECSU Student 1: Sharon Saunders
ECSU Student 2: Kevin Trotman
ECSU Student 3: Denisa Edwards
High School Student 1: LaVonna Felton
High School Student 2: Jackie Hall
Parallel Processing Research Project Description


The sieve of Eratosthenes has long been a standard benchmark program for integer operations on a sequential computer. We will develop a parallel prime number sieve to demonstrate several concepts fundamental to parallel computing. This example also illustrates a process of parallel program development which can be usefully applied to many problems.

After defining the problem and a sequential solution, we will begin the development of a parallel algorithm by analyzing the actions which must be taken and the order constraints on those actions. This makes it possible to define a maximally parallel, although impractical, algorithm. We will then develop a practical algorithm which can be mapped to a network of message passing processors, a pipeline.

The mapping of the algorithm to the array of processors brings up the issue of load balancing. We will develop an algorithm for static load-balancing, allocating the work so that each processor will have about the same amount to do.

We will investigate the performance of the algorithms by measuring the speedup and efficiency. Amdahl's Law gives theoretical limits on the speedup which can be obtained from parallel computers. This will lead to a final refinement of the algorithm based on using an efficient sequential algorithm within processors while maintaining the pipeline between processors.

The final aspect of algorithm development will be an analysis of communication issues: 1) Buffering between the processors reduces processor idle time spent waiting for communication with a neighboring processor; and 2) The effect of packing the integer messages into larger messages between processors so as to increase overlapping of communication with computation.

Parallel Processing Team

Instructor: Dr. Johnny Houston
Assistant Instructor: Michelle Brown-Emmanual
Consultant: Dr. Nan Schuller/Christopher Nevison
ECSU Student 1: Ervin Howard
High School Student 1: Connie Sawyer
High School Student 2: Kuchumbi Hayden
High School Student 3: Derrek Burrus
Mathematica
A System for Doing Mathematics by Computer
Training by Wolfram, Inc.  MARCH 11, 1995
The women in this story are in a minority group so small that in some years when national statistics are gathered, there is no one in the category at all. These women have paid a high price to be counted among their small number and have beaten the long odds placed against them simply because of their gender and race.

Martha Brown '89, Linda Hayden '89, Joan Sterling Langdon '89, and Elaine Smith '88 hold Ph.D.s in mathematics from American University. Their colleague Ann Taylor '88 earned her AU doctorate in education administration with an emphasis on teaching college-level mathematics. Their achievement defies the notion that females should abandon math in junior high school and leave the difficult calculations to men. It rejects the idea that an advanced degree is not an attainable goal for African-Americans, who historically have not funneled into the graduate school system at a rate anywhere near comparable to that of white Americans.

In the seven years 1985 through 1991, according to a National Research Council survey contained in the June 1992 Commission on Professions in Science and Technology report Professional Women and Minorities, 1,887 white men, 470 white women, 27 African-American men, and a mere 12 African-American women in the entire United States reported having earned a doctorate in mathematics. It doesn't take more than a knowledge of simple arithmetic to figure out that AU's four female African-American math Ph.D.s represent a full one-third of a very elite club. And with four more African-American women currently working on math doctorates at AU, it's clear the success of those seven years wasn't just a fluke.

We must be doing something right.

If you ask Nina Roscher, chair of AU's chemistry department and a faculty member since 1974, what it is that makes the difference, her cheeks pinken and she says quietly, "Dr. [Mary] Gray and I work hard for women." Gray, a former chair of AU's mathematics and statistics department and a professor there since 1968, is the person most often credited with focus-
jerk for my first class, who said, 'What are you doing here? Why don’t you stay home and take care of kids?' But that just made me work harder.” Gray has long been committed to civil, women’s, and human rights, and was elected chair of Amnesty International USA last fall (see page 7).

Both Gray and Roscher have been in the trenches, and neither is the type to pull punches. Graduate school in math is an arduous and at least three-year-long haul in a woman’s prime childbearing time . . . with no guarantees of good jobs, promotions, or tenure at the other end, says Gray. "[There] is just point-blank prejudice on the part of people in the mathematical community that women can’t do math . . . . When I started out thirty years ago they would say it. Now they don’t say it, but it still affects their hiring decisions, their promotion and tenure decisions," Gray says. Adds Roscher, "[And] we can’t appreciate fully the problems that black women face."

But being realistic about all those problems is the first thing AU does right. For starters, through networking with professional associations, other academic institutions, and alumni of the mathematics Ph.D. program, the university makes a conscious effort to attract women to the program who may have been out of school for a while. Candidates for the mathematics education doctorate must have already earned a master’s degree in either math or education. Both Gray and Roscher say that older students tend to be more committed to completing the Ph.D. But they also often have more demands to juggle—like spouses and children—and are likely to be giving up fairly comfortable earnings in order to take on the life of a student again.

Linda Hayden had earned a master’s of teaching in mathematics from the University of Cincinnati in 1972 and was teaching math and computer science at Elizabeth City University, North Carolina, when she decided that she really needed a Ph.D. She tried a computer science program at another university first but encountered “a lot of frustration,” she says. “[The program] was brand new. . . . Courses weren’t in place, and teachers couldn’t give you a curriculum and say, ‘Choose from these courses. When you do this amount of work then you will take your comps [comprehensive examinations], and so on. . . . It was all men, and there was just no understanding at all, no role models there. . . . I said, this is just not
do-able at this time at this institution."

Hayden settled for a master's degree in computer science instead, as did her graduate school colleague, Joan Sterling Langdon. But Langdon kept looking. When she heard about the AU program she says, "I called Linda up in the morning, somewhere like 6 o'clock. . . . She listened. She said, 'Okay.' Then she hung up the telephone."

"I rolled over and went back to sleep," laughs Hayden. "She called me back about an hour later, and she said, 'Joan, I really wish you hadn't called me,'" Langdon jokes. "Then, of course, everything started developing."

"Joan and I were both very motivated . . . and were looking for a place where [earning the Ph.D.] was do-able within a finite amount of time," Hayden explains. "We got the impression that if we were dedicated and worked hard, we would get it. We didn't mind that . . . Like I tell my students, 'Put your butt in the chair and your head in the book.' . . . But sometimes you can get into situations where there are a lot of politics involved. Also, being black women, in places where there is a lot of racism, there are a lot of other undercurrents that sort of deter you from your goal. We didn't feel that [when we visited AU]."

"You don't want to go to a school where you don't think you are going to get out of there," says Ann Taylor. At Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, where she has taught since 1968 and is now vice president of academic affairs and dean of the faculty, Taylor knew two faculty members who had gotten doctorates from AU. "American had a track record, as far as I was concerned, with African-Americans being able to complete their work."

That's the kind of track record that historically black schools, colleges, and universities—like Bethune-Cookman—have enjoyed for many years. For one thing, they offer strong role models. For another, says Elaine Smith, they have the reputation of being "far more nurturing and supportive of their students." Both are factors AU College of Arts and Sciences dean Betty Bennett points to in assessing AU's success. "The College of Arts and Sciences has always had a large number of women faculty members," she says. Out of twenty-five women on the math and stat faculty, six, or 24 percent, are women—a high percentage consider-
edge that they butted heads through most of the ten years that Smith was working on her degree while also teaching as an adjunct faculty member. "There were a lot of things I admire about Mary and still do. . . . [But] we are both very strong women, very strong women. . . . You know she didn’t take much. I didn’t take much. I have a mouth. She has a mouth. You get the picture," Smith says. For Smith, support also came in the form of classmates—a network Gray explicitly encourages.

I would never have made it without them," Smith says. "Never. I bugged people to death. Child, there were spouses who stopped talking to me because I was calling up their husbands so much at night" looking for help with complicated concepts. "I didn’t even care because I had to get it, and they were willing to help me get it. That is how I survived."

Says Martha Brown, "The big thing for me was, would AU permit part-time participation in the program? I had a job. I needed a job. And if I [was going to get a Ph.D.] I had to do it on a part-time basis. That was not . . . a problem with AU."

But the other women were taking time out of their already established careers and looked to the university for solid financial help. That’s where part-time teaching positions and Nina Roscher came in.

Roscher has spent more than half her career in university administration, particularly in graduate and academic affairs, and since 1986, has also held a part-time position as program director of science education in the National Science Foundation. She knows the world of grants cold and since 1981 has used that expertise to bring hundreds of thousands of dollars to AU for more than thirty women and minority graduate students in math, chemistry, and law, through the federal government’s Patricia Roberts Harris Fellowship Program. Named for the first African-American woman to attain a cabinet position (secretary of housing and urban development and of health education and welfare under Pres. Jimmy Carter) and to head a U.S. law school (at Howard University) the program provides selected graduate schools with stipends for students whose race or gender or both have been, in federal jargon, underrepresented in certain fields. For mid-career students like Hayden, whose husband and nine-year-old son packed up and moved to Washington with her, and Langdon, who, when she came to AU was a single mother with six-year-old twin girls and a thirteen-year-old daughter, the stipends made all the difference.

Make no mistake, for every one of these women, getting that Ph.D. was a sacrifice. But they have more than gender and race in common. These women also possess incredible energy—just

But supportive doesn’t necessarily mean coddling.
try pinning one of them down on the telephone after six o’clock in the morning or before ten o’clock at night—and another quality, one that perhaps can best be called tenacity.

Says Elaine Smith, “It was a struggle, honey. It was a long and hard struggle from beginning to end. . . . I am fond to this day of telling my students that I got my Ph.D. in Perseverance. At some point I just refused to walk away not having that piece of paper to show for all the time and energy that I knew I had already put into it.”

“It was tough for me,” says Ann Taylor, who “burned up I-95 and the airlines” between Washington, where she lived while working on her degree, and Daytona Beach, where her husband is on the faculty at Bethune-Cookman. “I shed a lot of tears. I can remember many an evening leaving the campus and crying all the way through Rock Creek Park as I drove home. But I don’t know anybody who gets through a doctorate without shedding a tear.”

And was it worth it? “I can honestly say yes. We were up a lot of hours, we were poor, we went through a lot of changes . . . but it was all worth it. It was a good move,” Langdon says.

“Yes,” says Smith. “To see the looks on my students’ faces as I tell them the stories of how I went after that degree and to hear them ask me why is it that they call me ‘Doctor,’ giving them the opportunity to share some of these things, that alone has been worth it.”

What with the promotions and the job offers, the conferences and the grants, and the recognition that all of these women have received since earning that degree, it would be easy to say that Smith is just mouthing platitudes. But that’s clearly not her style. What she is talking about is indeed the real payoff of AU’s success . . . because the women in this story believe that every African-American woman who achieves that Ph.D. is a new role model for an elementary school child, or a high school student, or a college student who could be in graduate school someday and on the way to making sure that this small group gets bigger faster.

Says Linda Hayden, who has returned to teaching at historically black Elizabeth City University, where this past year 60 percent of the seniors from a group she mentored decided to go on to graduate school, “That’s what gets me up in the morning.”